

Conflict Update # 254

November 6th, 2022

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Conflict Assessment

Russian losses – 75,930 (490) soldiers killed, 2,765 (+7) enemy tanks, 5,611 (+10) armored combat vehicles, 1,781 (+5) artillery systems, 391 (+0) MLRS systems, 202 (+0) air defense systems, 277 (+0) warplanes, 260 (+) helicopters, 1,465 (+3) UAVs of the operational-tactical level, 399 (+2) cruise missiles, 15 (+0) warships/cutters, 4,184 (+7) trucks and tankers, 4 Iskander Missile Launchers (+0), 76 fuel bowsers (+0) and 155 (+0) units of specialized equipment.

Key Takeaways

Brief Russian war analysis – Russia continues to

- a. withdraw across multiple fronts
 - b. buy second-grade munitions from North Korea and Iran
 - c. suffer catastrophic demographic challenges
 - d. see mobilization efforts fail
 - e. lose thousands of soldiers on a weekly basis
 - f. lose hundreds of tanks, APVs and other heavy equipment
 - g. lose jet fighters and attack helicopters
 - h. fail to replenish weapons systems, missiles, aircraft and heavy equipment
 - i. see revolts among newly-drafted battalion strengths
 - j. fire senior generals and commanders
 - k. not have any oblast under full Russian control
 - l. lose land to Ukraine
 - m. have a winter challenge in that its forces are not properly equipped for sub-zero warfare
 - n. suffer a plethora of other challenges
- o. Atop this is (i) continuing global isolation, (ii) warnings from China to not use nuclear weapons under any guise, (iii) a looming financial catastrophe destined to dramatically reduce foreign revenue and (iv) pending war crimes investigations and charges
- p. And then there is the continuing NATO and US resolve to supply Ukraine with advanced and modern weaponry and munitions, the majority of which has yet to see service introduction.

So we have $(a+b+c+d+e+f+g+h+i+j+k+l+m+n) + (o(i)+o(ii)+o(iii)+o(iv)) + p$

Russian Capability

Not a good war equation. There are a plethora of other factors that can be included in this analysis.

A nuclear attack, despite global resistance, is not calculated into this equation, nor is any global response to such usage.

Putin issues ominous warning about major attack on key Ukrainian city - Putin said yesterday that civilians in Kherson must be "removed" from the city as a battle for it could be coming soon.

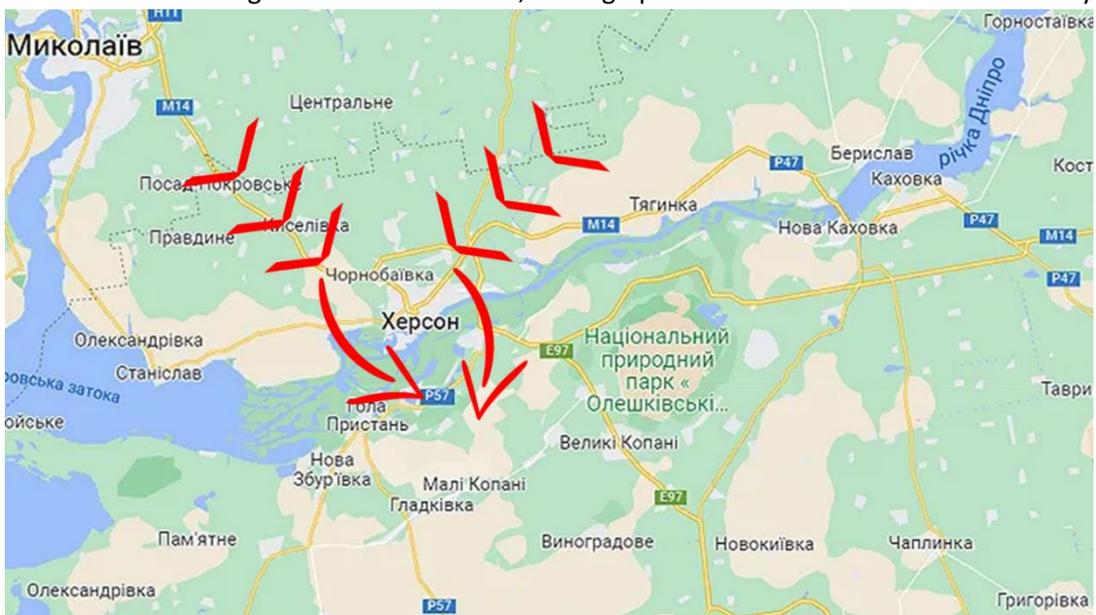
"Now, of course, those who live in Kherson must be removed from the zone of the most dangerous actions," the Russian leader said, adding that citizens "must not suffer" from attacks in the city, according to The Moscow Times.

Putin's comments come as Russian troops have reportedly abandoned checkpoints in the occupied Ukrainian region of Kherson in recent days. In addition, Russian flags have been removed from the administration building in Kherson, as well as a city council building, according to reports.

Russians are setting up defences on right bank of Dnipro and mining left bank - On the right bank of the Dnipro river on the southern front, the Russians are setting up defence lines, and on the left they are mining the coast and evacuating residents.

On the right bank, the Russians are maneuvering forces and resources, setting up defence lines. On the left bank they are mining the coast, evacuating residents from a 15-kilometre zone, digging trenches and setting up firing positions.

Russia is moving military equipment and personnel from the left to the right bank of the river amidst the recent decisive successes of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in liberating the oblast.



They are setting up staggered withdrawal

barriers – seen in red chevron icons in the above map, where withdrawing from the uppermost battle line to the following line allows them to protect their withdrawal. The challenge though is the extremely slow passage across the river, with Ukraine having destroyed all viable crossing points, and now striking evacuation vessels as they convey retreating Russian soldiers to the opposite bank.

The further challenge for retreating Russian battalions is in moving heavy equipment across the river, this is nigh on impossible given the dearth of suitable causeways to accomplish this.

Mining the west bank – it takes around 10 years to remove mines from “contaminated” land.

The secret mission to snatch Crimea back from Putin’s clutches - Ukrainian forces are working to force Russia to retreat from Kherson, a key region seized in the early days of the war this year. But behind the scenes, Ukrainian President Zelenskyy’s administration is plotting next steps for a takeover of Crimea, which Russia has occupied since 2014 when illegally annexing the peninsula.

Tamila Tasheva, pictured below, the Ukrainian official responsible for planning the take back Crimea, said she is looking to the battlefield and an underground network of informants in Crimea to help.

Tasheva has long believed the “main mechanism” for expelling Russia depends on political factors and diplomacy with allies. But as the invasion rages into its ninth month and Ukraine has begun to gain momentum in counteroffensives, the military component of the Crimea takeover is upon the Ukrainian government.

Ukraine’s intelligence services have told her they believe Ukraine will be able to seize Crimea by the spring or summer of 2023, Tasheva said. But she thinks it might happen sooner.

The Zelenskyy administration’s optimism about liberating Crimea underlines a dramatic shift in momentum in the war over recent months. Global leaders who fretted that Kyiv would fall to Russia in a matter of days after Russia’s invasion are now watching Ukrainians make stunning gains on the battlefield. The strategy has now shifted from talk of clawing back territory Russia has taken this year to taking back territory Russia took in 2014, including Crimea.

Retaking Crimea will be a major blow to Moscow. For Putin, losing it will be personal, and may threaten his political legitimacy, especially he seized Crimea in 2014, according to Angela Stent, a former national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council.

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Following numerous attacks in Crimea, Russia has intensified assaults on Ukrainian infrastructure, knocking out Kyiv’s water and power supplies. These attacks show Putin is likely raging about incursions into Crimea, according to Stent.

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Tasheva’s confidence about planning a Crimea takeover comes as signs emerge that Russia could be preparing to retreat from Kherson, which would be a necessary precursor to going after Crimea, she said.



planning a Crimea takeover Russia could be preparing to would be a necessary precursor

Russian forces seized Kherson in the early days of the war. It sits just north of Crimea and represents a key component of Putin’s dreams to create a “land bridge” from Russia to Crimea, which has been crucial to supplying troops and pushing northwards into Ukraine.

And although Russian forces were able to take Kherson—in part by using Crimea as a launchpad—it’s now Moscow’s only major stronghold on the western side of the Dnieper River.

The White House has declined to comment on Ukraine’s prospects of taking back Crimea.

Although timing is up in the air on when Kyiv will make the move, one thing is clear: its plan includes cutting the peninsula off completely from Russia once Zelenskyy’s forces expel them, according to Ukrainian military intelligence. Budanov indicated in an interview that a key bridge that connects Crimea to Russia, the Kerch bridge, will be taken out once Crimea is de-occupied.

Concerns remain Russia might interpret an attempt to retake Crimea as an invasion of Russian territory, particularly as Moscow has been hinting it might use nuclear weapons if its territory is threatened.

Tasheva doesn’t buy it.

Russia is “nuclear blackmailing,” Tasheva said, adding that she thinks expelling Russia out of territory it illegally annexed is not cause for escalation.

European leaders in particular have expressed concerns to Tasheva about Russia escalating over Crimea attacks. But for those who are worried, Tasheva stressed it’s not just about taking back territory from Russia. It’s about saving civilians, Crimean Tatars, and Ukrainians from Russia’s brutality.

“De-occupying Crimea is not an escalation. It’s our way for a liberation,”

Battalion of Russian draftees reportedly wiped out near Ukraine's Makiivka, survivor says hundreds killed - A battalion of Russian draftees from the Voronezh region has been wiped out on the line of contact near Ukraine's Makiivka, Verstka news outlet reports, citing one of the survivors, Alexey Agafonov.

The man says that his battalion arrived on the front line in the early hours of 2 November.

"They sent us there and told us to dig trenches. We had only three shovels for the entire battalion, we had no equipment at all. We dug what we could, and by the morning, they'd started firing at us: from artillery, Grads [rocket launchers], mortars, drones, they shot to kill. When it started, the officers immediately ran away. Between the attacks, we tried to dig trenches, but we were detected by drones right away and shot at. Out of 570 people, 29 survived, 12 are injured, the rest are gone," Agafonov said.

The wife of another draftee confirmed that according to her husband, hundreds of soldiers were killed in the shelling. "Over half of them are dead, for sure," she said.

According to Agafonov, draftees from all around Russia are brought to the area to cover up defence breaches, while contract servicemen and volunteers are staying behind.

Agafonov and the surviving soldiers retreated to Svatove, where they found draftees from other crushed battalions.

"It's a complete mess. The survivors and the newcomers are grouped into new battalions and sent to the front line to cover up the line of defence," he said.

The spouse of another draftee from the same battalion, Lyudmila Chernykh, has also confirmed Agafonov's words.

"He [Lyudmila's husband] called me in the morning from someone else's phone and told me what happened, that they sent them to dig the defence line, they came under mortar fire, and then they somehow managed to reach Svatove from Krasnodon, where they are hiding now. They are scared of going anywhere, even afraid of coming to the checkpoints. Their leadership abandoned them, they don't know what to do, they're just asking for help," she said.

Ukrainian defenders hit Russian command post in Zaporizhzhia Oblast: about 50 servicemen killed - According to UGS, the Russian command post located in the settlement of Basan, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, was hit.

As a result of the strike, 10 units of equipment were reportedly destroyed and about 50 servicemen were killed.

An attack was also carried out on a cluster of the occupiers' units in the village of Chulanivka, Kherson Oblast.

In the areas near the settlements of Polohy and Marfopil, 20 units of military equipment were destroyed and up to 80 Russian servicemen were wounded.

Ukrainian jet fighters carried out seven airstrikes on Russian positions over the past 24 hours.

Six clusters of military personnel, weapons and military equipment, as well as the position of the occupiers' anti-aircraft defences, were targeted. Ukrainian air defence units shot down four UAVs.

Ukraine's Armed Forces strike Kakhovka HPP using HIMARS, one of the missiles hits dam lock - Ukraine has shelled the Kherson region's Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant, using a HIMARS multiple rocket launcher system, Russian state-owned news agencies TASS and RIA Novosti report, citing emergency services.

"Ukraine's Armed Forces won't stop their attempts to destroy the Kakhovka HPP and create the conditions for a humanitarian catastrophe. Today at 10AM, a strike was conducted using six HIMARS missiles. Air defence units shot down five missiles, while the other one hit the lock of the Kakhovka dam, it was damaged," TASS cites a representative of the emergency services.

RIA Novosti clarifies that the hit “did not lead to destruction of crucial parts” of the dam.

As of now, there is no information on the casualties, Russia’s news agency Interfax reports.

The Ukrainian side has not yet commented on the situation.

Earlier today, deputy head of the occupation “government” of the Kherson region Kirill Stremousov said that Ukraine’s Armed Forces had been assembling armored vehicles and tanks in the Kherson direction.

Ukraine has killed more than 500 Russian prisoners recruited by Wagner private military contractors -

As of early November, more than 500 prisoners recruited from Russian prisons have died in the war in Ukraine.

The publication notes that the Ukrainian Center for the Analytical Studies and Countering Hybrid Threats discovered and verified more than 200 letters signed by Andrey Troshev, one of the heads of the Wagner Group, with condolences to the families of mercenaries recruited by Wagner in Russian colonies.

Based on the document numbering, the newspaper concludes that in less than a month (from 18 September to 13 October) Troshev sent at least 224 letters of condolences. In total, at least 458 prisoners hired by Yevgeny Prigozhin died in Ukraine by mid-October.

Ukraine Armed Forces repel Russian attacks near 14 settlements in 4 oblasts - The Armed Forces of Ukraine have repelled attacks by the occupiers near settlements in Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts over the past 24 hours.

Occupiers’ attacks have been repelled in areas in and around the settlements of Zybyne in Kharkiv Oblast; Belohorivka in Luhansk Oblast; Andriivka, Bakhmutske, Berestov, Maiorsk, Makiivka, Marinka, Ozarianivka, Opytne, Pavlivka, Yakovlivka and Yampolivka in Donetsk Oblast and Shcherbaky in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.

Untrained Russian troops abandon front line positions, hide in forest – A group of untrained Russian troops, who were drafted after Putin mobilized in September, fled from the front line in Ukraine and have been hiding in a forest for two weeks, according to media reports.

The mother of one of the mobilized soldiers, Elena Solodovnikova, told Siberia.Realii that her son and four other men from the Pervomaisky district of the Tomsk region are being accused of desertion, which carries a prison sentence of up to 15 years.

Relatives of the five mobilized men say they did not undergo the required military training, and that they were deployed to Ukraine’s Luhansk region without ammunition or food.

The men were promised three months of training in a military unit in Omsk, but instead, were immediately taken to Yekaterinburg, given uniforms and sent to the border area in the Rostov region on September 29.

She said they were called "meat" and "minced meat" in their military unit and that the group retreated from the front line after coming under mortar fire and are now hiding in a forest.

"There was no equipment. There were machine guns, but what are they going to do with machine guns against tanks?" Solodovnikova said.

Comment – I was listening to a recording last night of a Russian speaking to his headquarters regarding being pulled back. He answered that when shells started falling, the first to leave were the commanders, that they had three spades and machine guns – against tanks and rockets. He was instructed to return and fight.

Western tank helping destroy Iranian drones at center of ammo dispute - Germany has faced criticism for not giving enough military aid to Ukraine to fight Putin's forces, but Berlin's supply of hardware that can down Russian drones and missiles has become the center of a different dispute.

The Germans have supplied Ukraine with 30 of the Gepard self-propelled anti-aircraft guns (SPAAG), along with 6,000 rounds of ammunition. The hardware has already won praise for their ability to counter Iranian-made drones that Russia is using to hit civilian and military targets.

Also known as the Flakpanzer Gepard, the piece of kit is a mainstay of the air defense of the German Army (Bundeswehr) and other NATO countries, but the ammunition for it is posing a diplomatic problem for Berlin.

German Defense Minister Lambrecht asked Switzerland to re-export 12,400 rounds of Swiss-made ammunition for the Gepard to Ukraine, but Bern has refused because doing so would violate its neutrality. Berlin made an earlier request in June.

The 35mm shells had been originally supplied by Swiss companies to the German army decades ago on the condition that they could not be re-exported without Swiss approval.

Defense Minister Reznikov on new AA systems coming to Ukraine - At the latest Ramstein-format meeting of NATO Defense Ministers last week, Ukraine communicated that air and missile defense is its top priority, according to the minister.

"Our partners have got a handle on it," said Reznikov.

"Today, they are also determined to secure our skies: HAWK 23 systems were recently announced. As you know, German IRIS-T systems are now in operation as well. NASAMS systems – along with trained crews – are currently en route. Also, we are about to receive a Crotale system from our French partners. Other air defense systems are under discussion right now."

He added Kyiv would continue receiving artillery shells and ammunition for multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), as part of the long-term international support of Ukraine in its war against the Russian invasion.

"Today, everything is being discussed: hubs for repairs and maintenance, developing and procuring weapons Ukraine needs from their manufacturers, on a long-term basis," Reznikov added.

"Everyone is aware that Ukraine's upcoming victory wouldn't mean the end of this assistance."

Russian officials ramp up police presence amid growing unrest - Russian officials are ramping up police presence in the far eastern Primorsky Krai region amid growing unrest over the war in Ukraine, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said Friday.

As part of its daily operational update on Facebook, the General Staff said officials in the region have been forced to introduce additional security measures and strengthen its police force.

In the city Vladivostok, authorities are preparing for possible anti-war protests, the update said.

Local residents are "expressing dissatisfaction over earlier mobilization measures and great losses of representatives of the region in the war in Ukraine," the General Staff said.

Russia continues shelling civilian villages – Russia is continuing to shell innocent villagers and farmsteads in their quest to utterly destroy Ukrainian life and culture.

Last night they shelled villages in Sumy Oblast along the Kharkiv border from within Russia, the city of Nikopol in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, and have fired 157 shells and bombs on smaller villages.

Over the course of the past 24 hours, Russian forces carried out 4 missile strikes and 19 airstrikes, as well as over 75 attacks using multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS).

More than 35 Ukrainian cities, towns and villages came under Russian fire, including the settlements of Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts.

On other fronts, the Russians continued to attack military and civilian targets:

Sivershchyna front: deployed mortars and tubed artillery to shell areas in and around the settlements of Mykolaivka and Senkivka in Chernihiv Oblast and Studenok in Sumy Oblast;

Slobozhanshchyna front: deployed mortars and tubed artillery, shelling areas in settlements of Bolohivka, Budarky, Zybyne, Krasne, Odnorobivka, Okhrimivka, Starytsia, Strilecha and Udy in Kharkiv Oblast;

Kupiansk and Lyman fronts: deployed tanks, mortars and tubed and rocket artillery to fire on areas in settlements of Berestov, Vyshneve, Kotliarivka of Kharkiv Oblast, Nevske in Luhansk Oblast, and Lyman and Torske in Donetsk Oblast;

Bakhmut front: used tanks and various artillery to fire on areas in Andriivka, Bakhmut, Bakhmutske, Bilohorivka, Verkhokamianske, Ivanivka, Klishchiivka, Maiorsk, Opytne, Soledar, Spirne and Yakovlivka in Donetsk Oblast;

Aydiivka front: used tanks, mortars, and tubed and rocket artillery to fire on areas in and around the settlements of Aydiivka, Krasnohorivka, Marinka, Nevelske, Novomykhailivka, Opytne, and Pervomaiske in Donetsk Oblast;

Novopavlivka front: used all types of artillery to fire on areas in and around the settlements of Bohoyavlenka, Velyka Novosilka, Vodyane, Vuhledar, Vremivka, Pavlivka and Prechistivka in Donetsk Oblast;

Zaporizhzhia front: tanks, mortars and tubed and rocket artillery to fire on areas in and around the settlements of Zaliznychne, Olhivske, Shcherbaki and Yurivka in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.

Pivdennyi Buh front: more than 25 cities, towns and villages situated along the line of contact came under Russian fire.

Comment – Russia states that it is “saving” these folk from Nazism and oppression. Cowardly tactics.

Russia destroying civilian ships on river in southern standoff – Ukraine today accused Russia of large-scale destruction of civilian vessels moored on the banks of the Dnipro River in the occupied southern region of Kherson that Kyiv's forces are trying to capture.

Ukrainian forces have been piling pressure on Russian troops on the western bank of the Dnipro that bisects Ukraine, fueling speculation that Moscow's troops are preparing to retreat to the other side.

Ukrainian General Staff (UGS) spokesperson said in a statement that the fuel from the destroyed vessels had leaked into the river's delta and also accused Moscow's forces of appropriating the vessels' engines and other equipment.

UGS gave no explanation for Moscow's actions. Destroying civilian vessels would prevent Ukrainian forces from using them should they decide to cross to the eastern side in the event of any Russian withdrawal.

There was no immediate comment from the Russian Defence Ministry.

The statement fitted into a pattern of mounting tension in the region where Russian-installed occupation officials said on Sunday that an act of sabotage had knocked out power and water supply in the city of Kherson and a number of settlements.

Russian troops loot Kherson as lines redrawn ahead of final battle for city - Things are disappearing in the Ukrainian city of Kherson at a rapid rate. Some are physical objects. Russian troops are taking away ambulances, tractors and private cars. Cultural things are going too: archives, and paintings and sculptures from the art and local lore museums. Even the bones of Catherine the Great's friend and lover, Grigory Potemkin, have been grubbed up from a crypt in St Catherine's cathedral and spirited away.

Russian soldiers are ferrying this loot across the Dnieper river. They have also been deporting local citizens under the guise of a humanitarian rescue mission. Others have refused to leave. A round-the-clock curfew has been introduced. Nobody knows how many of Kherson's 300,000 pre-war inhabitants remain. According to relatives of those still there, the city is mostly empty, its ghostly fate likely to be decided over the next few weeks in a series of bloody battles.

Last Thursday, the Russian flag was taken down from Kherson's neo-classical regional state administration building. The gesture prompted speculation that Moscow was about to abandon the city, which it seized in early March, paving the way for the Ukrainian army's triumphant return. From a military perspective this would make sense, as the Russian contingent is effectively surrounded. At the same time it seems far-fetched Putin and his generals would leave Kherson without a struggle.

Locals are unconvinced by Moscow's machinations. "It's probably a trick," Alyona Lapchuk told the Observer. "The Russians are dressing up as civilians and hiding in houses."

Lapchuk, who left Kherson in April, said it was more likely Russian troops were preparing for bitter street-to-street fighting over the autumn and winter. If this strategy failed, the Russian army would probably "destroy" Kherson, in much the same way it flattened Mariupol, killing tens of thousands of civilians, she suggested.

"Kherson is hell. People are kidnapped and tortured," Lapchuk, who ran a garage business in the city, said. She added: "They have the same algorithm. People are beaten up badly, their ribs are broken and then they are raped. Right now there is forced deportation from Kherson. The world needs to know. Russia is destroying Ukraine and Ukrainian people."

Mine clearance of entire Luhansk Oblast will take at least 10 years - It will take at least 10 years to demine the entire occupied part of Luhansk Oblast.

Serhii Haidai, Head of the Luhansk Oblast Military Administration said "It will take at least 10 years to demine the entire territory of Luhansk Oblast." He noted that first of all, the main overpasses and the grounds of critical infrastructure facilities will be demined.

"But there are 100-180-200 strikes an hour on any one section of the front. That's thousands of strikes per day. This leaves behind many unexploded shells, mines and missiles, and many areas are being mined remotely. No one even has a proper map of the mines," Haidai explained.

He also noted Ukraine is turning to other countries and international organisations for assistance with mine clearance. Croatia, for example, has agreed to provide such assistance.

Regarding the situation at the front in Luhansk Oblast, Haidai noted that it is "quite difficult, but under control."

"Despite the limited reserves and time that has played into the hands of the invaders, the Armed Forces of Ukraine are still moving forward," he said.

Long-range Russian missile attacks – Because Ukraine shoots down invading aircraft and because Russian military units are being pushed back, they have resorted to firing long-range missiles from their Black Sea fleet and their air

force. Missiles are fired from within Russian airspace as they fear entering Ukrainian airspace will lead to losses of delivery platforms.

The question now becomes how long it will take Ukrainian defense batteries to start targeting these platforms – many within Russia itself?

It does speak of course to the Russian dilemma of being unable to influence military combat results and direction.

Ukraine worried about losing internet service following Starlink outages – Ukrainian officials are concerned about losing internet service after 1,300 of the military's Starlink satellites went offline.

Starlink, the internet service run by Elon Musk's SpaceX, has been crucial to allowing Ukrainian communications throughout the war with Russia as Russian forces have destroyed much Ukraine's own internet networks.

CNN reported the outage began Oct. 24 and has been a "huge problem" for the Ukrainian military, according to a person who told CNN that the terminals had been disconnected because of a lack of funding.

SpaceX was charging Ukraine's military \$2,500 per month to keep each of the 1,300 Starlink units online, causing the total cost to approach almost \$20 million by September, the person told CNN. They said the military eventually could not afford to pay the costs anymore.

Russians and separatists deport Ukrainians from Kakhovka district - Russia has started deporting residents from six hromadas [an administrative unit designating a town, village or several villages and their adjacent territories - ed.] in Kherson Oblast.

"Since 6 November, the Russians have been forcibly conducting what they refer to as 'evacuating' residents from the hromadas of Hola Prystan, Oleshky, Kakhovka, Hornostaivka, Velyka Lepetykha, and Verkhni Rohachyk. They started with the settlements alongside the Dnipro River, where the Russians are actively building a defence line at the moment."

Russia has defined a 15-kilometre area along the left bank of the Dnipro River as the so-called evacuation zone.

As per the information available to the National Resistance Center, the Russians are accommodating their soldiers in the houses previously occupied by the "evacuees". The occupiers take this opportunity to loot Ukrainians' homes.

The National Resistance Centre's report also notes that the occupiers are stealing property from medical establishments. In particular, they have already moved all the equipment and medicines from the Hornostaivka Primary Healthcare Centre and the Nova Kakhovka Central Hospital to temporarily occupied Crimea.

Comment – Is this the precursor to blowing the dam upriver? So that Russia can state it didn't kill civilians? Or is it encamping in civilian houses in anticipation of the coming Ukrainian advance?

Kyiv prepares for a winter with no heat, water or power - The mayor of Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, is warning residents that they must prepare for the worst this winter if Russia keeps striking the country's energy infrastructure - and that means having no electricity, water or heat in the freezing cold cannot be ruled out.

"We are doing everything to avoid this. But let's be frank, our enemies are doing everything for the city to be without heat, without electricity, without water supply, in general, so we all die. And the future of the country and the future of each of us depends on how prepared we are for different situations," Mayor Vitali Klitschko told state media.

Russia has focused on striking Ukraine's energy infrastructure over the last month, causing power shortages and rolling outages across the country. Kyiv was scheduled to have hourly rotating blackouts Sunday in parts of the city and the surrounding region.

Peace Talks

US 'privately tells Zelensky to signal openness to Putin talks' - The US is privately encouraging Ukraine's leaders to signal an openness to negotiate with Russia and drop their public refusal to engage in peace talks unless president Vladimir Putin is removed from power, according to a report.

The Washington Post quoted unnamed people familiar with the discussions as saying the request by the US officials was not aimed at pushing Ukraine to the negotiating table, but a calculated attempt to ensure Kyiv maintains the support of other nations wary of fueling a war for many years to come.

The White House National Security Council had no immediate comment on the accuracy of the report.

A State Department spokesperson said: "The Kremlin continues to escalate this war and has demonstrated its unwillingness to seriously engage in negotiations since even before it launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine."

Moscow officials have repeatedly claimed that they are open to talks but are waiting to be approached by Ukraine or its western partners.

Six ways the war can end - Russia's war in Ukraine rages on without a clear end in sight. Here are 6 ways the conflict could play out.

1. **Cease-fire** - If the fighting reaches a stalemate, there could be some negotiated, temporary cease-fire between Russia and Ukraine, according to Seth Jones, the director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, or CSIS, International Security Program.
2. **Peace deal** - It is possible that the war could end with a peace deal, though a settlement is difficult because of Russia's and Ukraine's different goals and what they both view as their rightful territory. Putin is in too deep at the moment and far too committed with political and military capital.
3. **Russian victory** - When it began its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, Russia's goal was to take over the country completely.
4. **Ukrainian victory** - As long as Putin is at the country's helm, it would be very unlikely that Russian forces would retreat entirely, Jones said. "In Russia, bad things happen to rulers who lose wars," Mark Cancian, a retired US Marine colonel and CSIS senior advisor, previously told Insider.
5. **Long-term war** - Not all wars end with a clear victory for one side. Another possibility is that fighting continues to rage on without any cease-fire or settlement, which, according to Jones, could go on for years.
6. **Nuclear war and/or NATO intervention** - Putin has repeatedly made nuclear threats since he began the invasion of Ukraine and, in September, claimed that it was "not a bluff."

(Original article in Business Insider).

I would add a seventh.

7. **Russian breakup** - Where Russia dissolves through bankruptcy and internal revolution with oblasts breaking away from the Federation. China and Japan, both seeking to recover lands long held by Russia after previous conflicts and agreements, would welcome such a turn as these issues, already long-term in duration, are not set to dilute, irrespective of current and future Russian affairs. Caucasus countries and not in the least, Turkey, are all waiting for some sign of what the future "Russia" will look like. And the West has a vested interest in such events.

Should such a dissolution take place, it will surely lead to an end of the Ukrainian conflict, a la Germany in 1917 with then Russia.

Russian Mobilization

Drunken mass brawl breaks out among Russian troops – A drunken mass brawl broke out among Russian troops at a training center in Yurga, Siberia a video circulating on social media shows.

A large group of men drafted as part of Putin's mobilization decree, were filmed at the base in the Kemerovo region.

Lyubov Eduardovna Sobol, a Russian opposition politician, lawyer and member of the Russian Opposition Coordination Council, shared the clip on her Telegram account at the end of October, saying that regular soldiers of the 74th Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade at the base were indignant at the "endemic drunkenness" among the mobilized troops.

They "dragged the drunks" and "beat them," wrote Sobol, who produces opposition figure Alexei Navalny's YouTube channel "Navalny Live." The video shows military officers dragging unconscious soldiers away from the scene of the brawl.

Tatarstan report 'solving issues that have arisen among draftees' after videos of riots at assembly point emerge online - Leadership of the Kazan Higher Tank Command School in Russia's Tatarstan has set up phone-charging stations in tents and delivered dry firewood to a local draftee assembly point following videos of riots among servicemen unsatisfied with their living conditions that appeared online, local news agency Tatar-inform reports.

"We've found out that the issue with damp firewood came up due to recent rains and sleet: the wood stored on top became damp. We delivered new batches of dry firewood to the assembly point. Besides, phone charging stations have been set up in a number of tents," the publication reads.

The news agency also stated that head of the Kazan Higher Tank Command School Kirill Kulakov had talked to the draftees about "social matters" twice: yesterday and today. For the second talk, he was joined by Tatarstan deputy PM Rustam Nigmatullin. As a result, all issues have been resolved, and the servicemen have no more complaints, Tatar-inform claims.

Yesterday, videos allegedly depicting a riot of draftees at an assembly point in Kazan started to appear online. According to Telegram channels spreading the video, the servicemen complained of lack of food and water, the inability to wash their clothes, and the fact that they were handed out rusty rifles produced in 1970s that are "dangerous to shoot from."

'It was going so great before our homeland betrayed them' - 27 Mobilized Russians who retreated near Svatove are being threatened with prison time for desertion.

The mobilized men from the Yampolsky regiment of the Kantemirovskaya division have been forced to stay in an abandoned house in Svatove, Ukraine's Luhansk region, for almost a week without water and food. After they retreated from the front line, the command did not let them into the military base territory and threatened them with a court martial for refusing to return to the front line.

The group consists of 27 men, most of them are from the Moscow region. They were sent to the front line without any proper training, although they were promised during the draft that they would complete at least a two-week training course. In reality, the men who were mobilized in late September found themselves in a tent camp in the forests of Russia's border-straddling Belgorod region on 1 October where they had no training other than digging trenches, and were sent to the battle zone in Svatove, Ukraine's Luhansk region, with nothing but rifles.

Their company was commanded by two men, also mobilized, who lacked combat experience. One of them was killed by shelling, the other was seriously wounded. The men could not get in touch with their relatives for two weeks. They

contacted their wives on 26 October and asked for their help after General Lugovoy had threatened them with a court martial for desertion, as they said.

On September 28, the wives and mothers of the mobilized men filed a complaint to the Moscow military prosecutor's office of garrison No. 231 with a request to help their relatives. In the complaint, the women wrote that, on the orders of Major Nikolaev, the mobilized men from the 6th and 7th companies of the Yampolsky regiment of the Kantemirovskaya division were sent to the town of Svatove, Luhansk region, to the front line, where they suffered "strong mortar fire executed by Ukraine's army".

Due to the death of their commanders and lack of radio connection with the HQ, the men decided to leave the front line and get back to the HQ. There, they say, the command started intimidating them and threatening them with a court martial should they not return to the front line. In their complaint, the women say that their husbands cannot return to the front line since they have no equipment and commanders to lead them. The women ask the prosecutor's office to set up proper training for their men and provide them with decent equipment.

The guys would rather go to prison than return to the front line.

Comment – "It was so great" – this comment in and of itself shows Russian general acceptance of their invasion of Ukraine and desolation of Ukrainian peoples' lives and property. Russian draftees and their families couldn't care less for Ukraine, nor its planned demise at the hands of Putin and his cohorts – the Russian people.

Now they cry crocodile tears with (i) being drafted into the fight at personal risk and (ii) being woefully ill-equipped and untrained, placing them in danger of dying sooner than they thought. These concerns have nothing to do with the Ukrainian plight, Russians support this war and should feel the consequences thereof.

Wagner attempts to recruit fighters in border regions with Ukraine – Russian media - "Militia centers" serving this company will be fed recruits by local businesses, Wagner said.

Prigozhin said a quarter of the employees of local businesses will be sent to "serve in the trenches" every week. According to him, "militia centers" will be formed by the residents of the regions.

"If you are the owner of a small factory that employs 100 people, and 50 of them are adult males, then 25% should serve in the trenches, and 75% should continue their labor activity," the Concord company group's message reads.

"And so in a cycle – one week in the trenches, three in their houses and in production. If the enemy comes to Russian land, all 100% will defend their country. Today, we need 10 people per kilometer of the frontline, so 1,000 people per 100 kilometers."

'It's like making a tank operator fly a plane' - How Moscow military officials alter documents to draft men with no combat experience.

Over the course of mobilization the Russian military has drafted hundreds of thousands of people — including some who have never previously held a weapon. After receiving summonses, these unqualified draftees have gone to their local military commissariats to sort things out — only to get conscripted on the spot. But because they don't have the skills the army needs, the men have gone on to spend days being sent from unit to unit until officials eventually replace their true military occupational specialty — be it "cable technician" or "musician" — with the word "gunner." Multiple draftees who were drafted under these false pretenses have filed a complaint about this illegal practice with the Russian Military Prosecutor's Office. They told Meduza about their experiences.

Igor Zhadanov, 33 years old - Police officers from the military commissariat came to our work [in Moscow] and demanded our employer give them the military IDs of everybody who had previously served. They issued our draft orders right there — about 26 of them. I was off work, but I came in and asked, "Why exactly do you need me to go to

the military commissariat?" They said, "Because you're from a different region [the Rostov region], so we need to verify your information." I thought that since they just needed to check their records, why shouldn't I go?

After a day of being examined by "customers," we spent another night at Avangard, then they sent us to the Peter the Great Military Academy. It was [October] 21. There, I was given a confidentiality agreement — and if I didn't sign it, I would [automatically] be given the title of gunner. They told me, "Sign it first, then we'll tell you everything." I said, "No, tell me what exactly I'm going to be doing." I knew they didn't need cable technicians in those units. They said, "We're going to sign you up as a gunner." But I'm not a gunner! I've never held a gun, and I don't know how to use one. They said they didn't have a more suitable position for me. I refused to be retrained as a gunner, and they gave my military ID to the chaperone.

In the morning, we were taken to the Peter the Great Military Academy, where they issued orders to end our mobilization. The Strategic Missile Forces command provided a bus to take us to Moscow. The captain went in [to the military commissariat], then returned and said, "They won't let you in. You can go home." We said we wouldn't go home, because this was a trick — if we left, they could declare us deserters.

Finally, the captain wrote an official letter dismissing us until Monday. On Monday, when we went to the military commissariat, Kuznetsov, as far as we understood, had left so that he wouldn't have to see us. His subordinates said that he wasn't going to declare our mobilization complete — meaning he was going to find a way to sign us up as gunners no matter what. They issued us new draft orders.

Comments – (i) Absolute chaos in this system. There are multiple interviews of Russian draftees being "interviewed by customers" – commanders of battalions looking for specific skillsets, and then being declared a gunner or something else, (ii) huge conflict between military authorities, some of whom sympathize and advise draftees and others who plough ahead irrespective of consequences and (iii) how does Putin and the Kremlin expect to not only draft patriotic Russians, but also how do they expect these mistreated folk to view Russia in the future?

Occupiers transfer their refuseniks to another detention camp, undress them and threaten their lives -

After several articles in the media, the camp for Russian refuseniks in the occupied city of Perevalsk of Luhansk Oblast was dispersed; the detainees were transferred to another underground detention camp.

According to the media, most of the illegally detained men were transported, using deception, threats and torture, to a new underground detention camp for refuseniks, the exact location of which is currently unknown.

This was reported to Astra by sources in Luhansk Oblast as well as by the relatives of those mobilised, who are currently being held in a new underground detention camp.

Relatives of several members of the military who ended up in one of the "basements" in Luhansk Oblast have reported, the commanders told the men: "We will shoot and throw you into a pit and inform your relatives that you are missing."

"By such actions they are trying to bring back to the front lines those mobilized who submitted reports stating that they refused to participate in the so-called special military operation. Realizing that persuasion did not work, commanders began to threaten them with violence. Surnames and military ranks of the commanders are not known; they did not introduce themselves. Prisoners have reported they had not been fed for several days," relatives told the media.

Comment – Kyiv continues to destroy Russian supply lines, particularly arms depots, fuel bowsers and food wagons.

Reconnaissance aircraft from the UK and US continue to circle around Ukrainian airspace reading precise Russian locations and activities, relaying these to Ukrainian operators who then zero in with precision, destroying vital supply lines and command centers that Russia desperately needs. These draftees are feeling the effect of this precision warfare.

Impacts

Professor explains how Putin's war is collapsing Russia's education system - Denis Skopin, a professor at St. Petersburg State University, described how Putin's war in Ukraine is affecting Russia's education system.

"I think that Russian research and education system is collapsing, actually," Skopin recently told the BBC. "And, in my knowledge, in some good St. Petersburg and Moscow universities, there are lots of vacant teaching positions now just because people have left."

Skopin was fired from the university on October 26 for opposing his country's invasion of Ukraine, RFE/RL reported last Saturday. The associate professor, who taught philosophy at the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences, also protested against Russia's "partial mobilization" that sent 300,000 reservists to fight in Ukraine.

Russia votes in favour of resolution condemning its actions in Ukraine - Serhii Kyslytsia, Ukraine's Permanent Representative at the UN, has said that the amendments to the UN's resolution on combating the glorification of Nazism [Draft Resolution on Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fueling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance – ed.] have essentially condemned Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.

"Since 2005 Russia has been attempting to secure the UN GA's vote on the resolution which allegedly seeks to combat the glorification of neo-Nazism. Who wouldn't join this cause?"

But the draft resolution has been twisted and manipulated by Russian. That's why Ukraine and the US have always voted No. Russian propaganda would then falsely claim that 'Ukraine and the US do not condemn Nazism.'

It's a cheap trick for the Russian audience."

Kyslytsia noted that things were different this year. Russia introduced the draft resolution during the session of the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) of the UN General Assembly.

But the funniest thing is that Russia has ended up in a trap, because it was forced to vote in favour of the resolution even with this amendment adopted...Thus condemning its own actions. And it did vote."

Humanitarian

'Dad, you have five days before they adopt us' - How a Mariupol father survived a Russian POW camp and traveled to Moscow to save his kids - Yevhen is a former Ukrainian contract soldier from Mariupol. He has three children: 12-year-old Matvey, 7-year-old Sviatoslava, and 5-year-old Alexandra. After Yevhen and his wife divorced, the children stayed with their dad. At the start of the full-scale war in Ukraine, Yevhen and his children spent a month hiding from Russian shellfire in basements; after that, they were forcibly evacuated along with other Mariupol residents. Yevhen was ultimately put in a prison camp in Olenivka, while his children were taken to a boarding house near Moscow — and very nearly sent to live with a Russian family. Yevhen recounted to Meduza how he survived Russian captivity, saved his children, and escaped with the three of them to Latvia.

[After many of our neighbors were killed by shellfire], we wanted to leave the city, but we didn't have a car. My boss and I were ready to pay whatever amount of money it took, but nobody wanted to take us. Fuel was insanely hard to come by.

Then one day, a shell flew in through the kitchen and the bathroom [of my boss's apartment] and landed in the hallway where we were hiding. After that, I decided to take the kids to a shelter in a nearby hospital.

On April 7, the children were sitting next to the entrance [of the bomb shelter] with a lantern, playing and drawing. Two soldiers wearing white bands and [self-proclaimed] Donetsk People's Republic chevrons came in. They said that Chechen units would soon be coming to our shelter to conduct a 'cleanup operation,' and that they didn't recommend staying here. They said, "You have half an hour to evacuate." That was it.

So they sent us further — to a checkpoint station. They confiscated all of our sharp objects and started searching our bags. They looked through everything — even in our socks. They started looking through my documents and saw that I was former military. They [practically] rubbed their hands together: "Well, well, well." Then they locked me and my kids in a separate room, told us to wait, and left with our documents. We sat there until evening.

Up until the end, I was hoping common sense would win out. After all, I hadn't hidden the fact that I served — I had my military ID and my passport on me.

I Was taken away from my kids and into a building where they did interrogations. There were two young men sitting on a bench. I later learned that they were [Ukrainian] conscripts. Their hands were tied behind their backs and their eyes were covered with tape. They were facing the wall, and a third was being interrogated and beaten.

[After the Russian soldiers interrogated me,] they tied me up, put a baseball cap over my face and put me in a car, and put the two other guys there along with me."

They took us to the Novoazovsk temporary detention facility and put us up against a wall. Then some guy came out and started escalating things: "You don't know what you've gotten yourselves into. It's gonna be bad: I'm going to ask you questions, and if I see that you're lying, I'll either bash in your kneecaps or stab you in whatever part of your body I choose." They took one of the other guys before me, and I heard him getting beaten. Then they called in too, and I explained everything just as I had before. They didn't touch me, but I did spend another day lying in the cell with my arms and legs tied.

They untied me the next day, when they brought me in for another interrogation. First they photographed me, then they led me to the cell. We were there for a couple more days, then they crammed all 17 of us into a minibus, like animals, and brought us to the Donetsk Organized Crime Unit, where they photographed us all again and then took our fingerprints.

There were several investigators there, and they each took one of us into their office. They asked me the same standard questions: "What's your relationship to the Azov Battalion? And to the Ukrainian National Guard?" I explained the situation again.

Then they took me to a six-person cell that already had about 60 people in it. Water and air were the biggest problems. Everyone breathed through the crack between the door and the floor, and practically nobody spoke, because we were trying to save oxygen. The employees there bought us two loaves of bread and two bottles of water. We sat there like that for about 24 hours.

After that, the same investigator called me back in and said that they had printed something incorrectly in my statement and that I needed to sign the corrected version. Naturally, they didn't give me time to read it. Then they took us all to various police stations in Donetsk.

They brought us to Olenivka on a bus. [Eventually,] they took all 56 of us to the punishment cell — a six-person cell where we spent about 10 days. We drank industrial water whose origin was unclear and ate with no spoons: bread crusts on dirty dishes. You couldn't quite call it food; we ate it because we needed to eat something. Then they took us to the barracks. There were 485 people living there, sleeping on the floor. They also put us to work. That was the only way to get cigarettes, pieces of lard, and other food. We dug holes, cleaned, cut the grass, and planted stuff in a garden.

On May 26, they released me and my cellmates with no explanation. I had spent exactly 45 days in Olenivka.

[When we got to Donetsk the next day], the [other] guy was quickly issued his documents, while I waited half the day for mine. Then a woman came and gave me my documents and said, “Your children’s birth certificates aren’t here, because at 5:00 am today, your children flew to Moscow.” I was hysterical — my children were taken away the same day I was released!

I realized I couldn’t keep relying on other people, so I decided to go back to Mariupol to see what state our home was in. The city was already under the control of the [self-proclaimed] DNR, so there was no more shelling.

When I got to Mariupol, I realized there was nothing for us to do there. The city stunk — there were human remains [in the streets], and dogs gnawing on human arms and legs. It’s very scary to see a dog running with an arm in its mouth. I called some friends who lived outside the city, and they took me in. I lived with them for two or three days and found work at a boarding house in Melekino doing minor repairs.

Then Matvey (my son) called me: “Dad, you have five days maximum to come pick us up — otherwise they’re going to adopt us.” The [social workers] had offered either to send them to a family or to an orphanage. He told them categorically that until he spoke to me, he wouldn’t make a decision. After that call, everything inside of me snapped. I started calling my friends, my acquaintances, anybody I could think of. I asked for money to get to Moscow, prayed, and tried to borrow some. But in wartime, that’s not realistic.

After my conversation with Matvey, I called social services. They told me that it was all nonsense, and that [the boy had misunderstood]. My relatives advised me to contact Russian volunteers. I called them and explained everything. The next day, they sent a car for me. The volunteers sent me 2,000 rubles (\$32) through the driver, who took me from Melekino to Novoavosk, to the checkpoint. There, [the Russian soldiers] inspected me and harassed me a bit, and once we got to the Russian border, they took my passport. I sat there and waited for a long time. Then they undressed me and looked for tattoos. I told them, “I’m coming from Olenivka, from the filtration prison. Here’s my certificate.”

In the end, they let me cross the border, and I was given a free Russian SIM card. I called the volunteers. They told me to go to Taganrog, and from there to take the train to Rostov. From Rostov, I took a train to Moscow. The volunteers bought my ticket themselves.

When they learned about my situation, the volunteers wrote a letter addressed to Putin. And while I was on the way to Moscow, a representative of the Russian Children’s Rights Commissioner contacted me and said, “You’ve raised such a fuss throughout the whole country!” So I say, “Yeah — they’re trying to adopt my children!” And he goes, “What are you talking about? Your children just misunderstood.” Yeah, right — and I’m just some hick, I tell him.

[When I got there], the Children’s Rights Commissioner’s representative who I’d spoken to on the phone came out, along with a psychologist. I told them how and why my children ended up in the boarding house, and where I was and what I was doing that whole time. I showed them all the documents confirming that I’m a legal representative [of the kids]. Then they let me on the territory. I spent half a day filling out statements and signing forms. When everything was ready, the kids packed their things and we finally left.

Comments - (i) Russia was purportedly “rescuing” Ukrainians from Nazism and a military regime – this explains that this was no more than sleight of statement (which all parties know irrespective), (ii) there were thousands of civilians killed in Mariupol during Russian bombardments – a definitive war crime, how many will never be known as Russia will not permit inspection or visiting, (iii) the interrogators were themselves Ukrainian, albeit members of separatist groups, and how they conducted themselves is evidence again of war crimes and (iv) children taken from parents and then sent out for adoption is in and of itself a war crime.

Putin

Russia Firing Commanders to Deflect Blame From Leadership: U.K. - Russia is firing military commanders to deflect blame for failures in Ukraine from the country's leadership, according to British defense officials.

The latest intelligence update from the U.K.'s MOD noted that Colonel General Alexander Lapin had been fired from his role as commander of Russia's Central Military District in late October.

It said that Lapin had been "widely criticized for poor performance on the battlefield" by Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov and Putin ally Yevgeny Prigozhin, the founder of the notorious Wagner Group, a mercenary outfit fighting on Russia's side in Ukraine. Both blamed Lapin for the loss of Lyman, a key supply hub in eastern Ukraine.

The news follows a series of dismissals of senior Russian military commanders since Russia invaded Ukraine in late February. Commanders of the Eastern, Southern, and Western Military Districts were replaced earlier this year, the British MOD said.

"These dismissals represent a pattern of blame against senior Russian military commanders for failures to achieve Russian objectives on the battlefield," it added. "This is in part likely an attempt to insulate and deflect blame from Russian senior leadership at home."

Geopolitics

Romania rejects Putin's false statements that the country has 'territorial claims' against Ukraine - During his speech on Russia's Day of National Unity in Moscow on Nov. 4, Putin talked of Ukraine's supposed territorial disputes with Poland, Romania and Hungary over areas that were lost after the Second World War.

"We're talking about the territories taken away from Poland by Stalin after WWII. We have to admit it. Large areas were seized by the Soviets in Romania and Hungary," the dictator said, apparently projecting Kremlin geopolitical ambitions onto other states.

Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in contrast said Romania fully supports the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

It also condemned the current Russian armed aggression against Ukraine.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania rejects the assertions expressed by the President of the Russian Federation in a speech given on the occasion of the National Unity Day, which falsely induced the idea that Romania has territorial claims against Ukraine," the Romanian Foreign Ministry said in its post.

"The (Romanian Foreign Ministry) emphasizes that the war of aggression launched by Russia on Feb. 24 represents a serious and brutal violation of the principles of international law, including the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," the post added.

Comment – There are numbers of US and NATO troops present in Romania along the southern border with Ukraine toward the vital port of Odessa. It is reported that commanders of the units deployed have stated that they are battle ready and fully fitted out to deploy into Ukraine if need be and instructed.

Containment

The E-2 Hawkeye is unstoppable - The E-2 Hawkeye has been on active-duty service for six decades. Built by Northrup Grumman, the E-2 can operate in all-weather and from carrier decks, to provide tactical airborne early

warning (AEW). Designed in the 1950s, the Hawkeye took its maiden flight in 1960 and entered service in 1964. And today, remarkably, the E-2 is still in production; the E-2 has remained in production since 1960, making the Hawkeye the longest-produced carrier-based aircraft ever.

The E-2 has been deployed in and around Ukraine since the Russian invasion began.

Ukrainian scalpel precision targeting – Ukraine is equipped with Soviet-era weaponry, as is Russia and a multitude of other ex-Soviet states. Just like other ex-Soviet states, Russia had its own “globalization” where parts were manufactured, and assemblies completed in all of these states.

The Kremlin would then allocate tanks, rifles, missile batteries etc. to the states as [part of the Warsaw Pact alignment.

When the Soviet Union imploded in the 1990’s a number of these states joined NATO and the EU, gradually moving away from Russian-allocated weaponry. There was a humorous saying in Poland that “We build warships in Gdansk and in return they send us old military shoes as payment,” which I heard from a retired Polish soldier whilst in Warsaw some years ago.

After Russia invaded Ukraine earlier this year, Ukraine only had these Soviet-era weapons, with some very minor western-type small arms and technology applications.

That meant that coordinating Ukrainian fire in line with US satellite and stealth information was nigh on impossible, given the differing technologies and age of artillery and aircraft.

Now that has all changed though.

Ukraine, with modern artillery such as HIMARS and M777 pieces can now automatically and electronically link incoming satellite and reconnaissance information into their new weapons, allowing for pin-point accuracy and a vastly improved productivity rate – literally per round of ammunition.

Coupled to this was a very rapid re-fitting of Ukrainian ex-Soviet aircraft by the US to accommodate the latest radiation and similar-type missiles and weaponry. This further allowed satellite information to be fed into the fighter jets arming systems vastly improving air success.

This was all achievable through Ukraine receiving and converting to Western technology and connectivity, completely outclassing and outfiring Russian systems, still based on age-old Soviet technology.

Sanctions

Russians made nearly 10 million trips out of the country from July to September - From July to September of this year, Russians made 9.7 million trips outside the country, nearly twice as many as they made during the previous three month period, says Russian state broadcasting company RBC.

According to the publication, 70 percent of all trips out of Russia were to Abkhazia (2.5 million), Turkey (2.1 million), Kazakhstan (1.3 million), Georgia (around 460,000), and Finland (around 430,000).

RBC notes that the number of trips abroad exceeds 2021 figures for the same period, but does not reach pre-pandemic totals, when Russians made 16.1 million overseas trips.

However, Russian trips to post-Soviet countries broke recent records. Russians went to Armenia a little over 267,000 times from July to September, the most since 2018. In the third quarter of 2022, they made twice as many to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as in the same period in 2019.

They most often report at the borders that they are traveling for private purposes, mentioning tourism significantly less often.

- Mobilization was announced on September 21 in Russia. That day, Russians bought up all tickets for upcoming flights out of the country, and miles-long lines formed at land border crossings. Russians typically went to countries which they can enter without a visa.
- In October, many Russians who had no exemptions from mobilization were denied permission to leave the country, even if they had not been called up for military service. Media reported an FSB database of people who were barred from leaving the country – it contained around a million names. In November, media reported that the ban was no longer in effect.
- By various counts, several hundred thousand people had emigrated from Russia by early October.