

HIGHLIGHTS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR CHRONICLES

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RUSSIA SHELLS CIVILIAN TARGETS, EXPERTS PREDICT HALTING ITS OFFENSIVE IN DONBAS

During the week, multiple shelling was carried out in almost all regions of Ukraine, including the [Mykolaiv](#), [Odesa](#), [Kharkiv](#), [Sumy](#), [Rivne](#), [Chernihiv](#), [Cherkasy](#), [Donetsk](#), and [Poltava](#) regions. On June 20, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [stated](#) that Russian troops are again amassing power to launch a second attack toward Kharkiv. Since February 24, [there has not been a day in the region without shelling](#) of the occupants, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry [notes](#) that the purpose of the intensified shelling is to prevent the Ukrainian Armed Forces from reaching the state border. On June 26, [a series of explosions occurred in Kyiv](#) due to shelling of the central district of the city. One of the rockets struck an apartment building, destroying its upper floors; a [kindergarten](#) was also damaged. At least one dead and six wounded are [known, including Russian citizens](#).

On June 27, a missile strike struck the city of Kremenchug, Poltava region, destroying an active shopping center, [killing at least 20 people](#) and injuring 59. Debris removal [continues](#). [The U.S.](#), [Norway](#), and [Britain](#) responded to the Russian military strike on a peaceful target, noting that Russia will be held accountable for its crimes in Ukraine. The Russian Defense Ministry [said](#) it struck "hangars with weapons and ammunition". The UN [condemned](#) Russia's aggression, and a [meeting](#) of the UN Security Council was also held at the initiative of Ukraine. Hromadske's report from Kremenchug is [here](#).

On June 25, Ukrainian troops withdrew from the city of Severodonetsk, for which fighting lasted more than a month, to more fortified positions. The city is completely under [occupation](#), and it is only possible to leave it in the direction of the occupied territory. According to Serhiy Gaidai, head of the Luhansk Oblast Military

Administration, after capturing Severodonetsk, the Russian army focused all its forces on capturing Lysychansk. The city is suffering from air strikes.

However, [analysts at the Institute for the Study of War \(ISW\) predict](#) that the Russian offensive in the Donbas is likely to halt in the coming weeks, allowing Ukrainian forces to launch a "prudent counteroffensive". About the situation on the front by the morning of June 30 – [here](#).

EU SUPPORTS GRANTING CANDIDATE STATUS TO UKRAINE

On 23 June, the leaders of the European Union at a summit in Brussels [supported](#) granting candidate status to Ukraine. Before that, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) in which it called for granting this status to Ukraine and Moldova without delay. European Parliament deputies said that such a decision against the background of Russia's war against Ukraine would amount to a "demonstration of leadership and determination," noting that the country's accession would remain a structured process "based on merit," meeting the criteria for EU membership and effectively implementing reforms. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [called](#) the decision "a great step to strengthen Europe" at a time when war is a test of the ability to preserve freedom and unity.

Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Olga Stefanyshyn [said](#) that Ukraine plans to fulfill the recommendations of the European Commission to grant candidate status by the end of the year, for this purpose the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine plans to [adopt](#) more than 30 bills. [According to Natalia Forsyuk, director general of the Governmental Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration](#), candidate status gives Ukraine a stronger position in future peace talks and also opens Ukraine access to financial instruments. At the same time, accession to the EU may take about 7 years.

G7 COUNTRIES PLEDGED UNLIMITED SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

On 26 June, the summit of the G7 leaders began in Germany. In his [speech](#), Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [called](#) on Western leaders to do everything possible to end the Russia-Ukraine war by the end of 2022, including supplying Ukraine with air defense systems and tightening sanctions against Russia. He also invited the G7 to join the work on security guarantees for Ukraine and called for the development of effective mechanisms to ensure food security in the world. Separately, he stressed the importance of recognizing Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, radically restricting its oil revenues and confiscating all frozen and seized Russian assets. Post-war reconstruction of Ukraine, according to Zelensky, "will be the biggest economic project of our time", and he expressed conviction that the key role in it will be played by the G7 countries. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz earlier [said](#) that he planned to discuss a "Marshall Plan for Ukraine" because he saw no prospects for negotiations between Ukraine and Russia. One of the [decisions](#) made

during the summit was to strengthen sanctions against Russia. In their final statement, the G7 leaders [announced](#) that they would pledge indefinite support for Ukraine to protect it from Russian invasion.

THE AMOUNT OF ANNOUNCED INTERNATIONAL AID TO UKRAINE EXCEEDS 30 BILLION DOLLARS

CNN [quoted](#) an informed source as saying that the USA intends to announce the purchase of medium- and long-range NASAMS missile defense systems for Ukraine, as well as additional military aid. So far, a new \$450 million defense assistance package for Ukraine [has been announced](#), which will include additional HIMARS multiple rocket launchers. The first HIMARS enhanced mobility rocket artillery systems have already [arrived](#) in Ukraine. [Norway](#) and Great Britain are working together to provide Ukraine with long-range multiple rocket launchers, while France [plans](#) to supply armored personnel carriers. Germany [has published](#) a list of weapons to be transferred to Ukraine, some of which [have already been delivered](#). Residents of Ukraine [collected](#) 600 million hryvnas to buy four Bayraktar drones. Having learned about this, the company producing the drones decided to [provide them free of charge](#) for the needs of the Armed Forces.

Germany [will provide grant aid](#) of one billion euros, the money will be transferred to the Ukrainian state budget to finance priority social and humanitarian expenditures during martial law.

On 29 June, during the NATO summit, it was [decided](#) to provide an enhanced support package to Ukraine. In particular, it envisages the transfer of non-lethal defense weapons and improvement of cyber defense, and in the long term, modernization of Ukraine's defense sector to make it compatible with NATO standards.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has assured that the Alliance will continue to provide military and financial support to Ukraine as long as necessary.

The European Union has approved another 9 billion euros in aid to Ukraine, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki [said](#) after a meeting of EU leaders in Brussels. Bloomberg [notes](#) that a new program of macrofinancial assistance will consist of loans for 25 years with a 10-year grace period to reimburse the principal amount, Member States will provide about 8 billion euros, and the rest will come from the EU budget. According to the forecast, the first payment will take place this summer.

[According to the National Bank of Ukraine](#), international partners have transferred \$7.4 billion to Ukraine to cover the state budget deficit since the beginning of the full-scale war, and the total amount of the announced aid exceeds \$30 billion.

NEW SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA, U.S. POLITICIANS SEEK TO HAVE RUSSIA RECOGNIZED AS A STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM

Japan [announced](#) additional sanctions against Russia – the restrictions will be imposed on 70 people and 90 organizations, first of all, connected with the defense industry. A [ban](#) was imposed on imports of Russian gold to the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States and Japan. In addition, Great Britain [banned](#) the supply of goods and technology to Russia, which can be used in chemical and biological weapons, and [imposed](#) a number of other sanctions against the immediate entourage of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The Canadian Parliament [authorized](#) the seizure and sale of frozen Russian assets, and the country will also [expand](#) sanctions against individuals and organizations associated with the defense industry. On June 23, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee [supported](#) a resolution urging Secretary of State Anthony Blinken to recognize Russia as a sponsor of terrorism. Senators also voted in favor of a resolution that condemns the use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizes the impact of conflict on global food security. The document must now be put to a vote in the Senate, and the final decision will be made by the White House administration.

LITHUANIA BANNED TRANSIT OF SANCTIONED GOODS, RUSSIA THREATENS RETALIATION

Lithuania [has banned](#) the transit of [sanctioned goods](#) through its territory to the territory of the Kaliningrad region of Russia. Russia [calls](#) this decision a "blockade" and [threatens](#) to resort to "measures to protect national interests". Lithuania notes that agreements with Russia on transit have not been violated, and the ban is a measure to comply with the EU sanctions.

Against the background of the transit ban, Russia's Baltic Fleet began [scheduled](#) training of missile and artillery units.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell [said](#) that the accusations made by Russia against Lithuania regarding the transit of cargoes were "pure propaganda".

UKRAINE FILES LAWSUIT WITH THE ECHR, VICTIMS MAY JOIN

The Ukrainian Justice Ministry has filed another lawsuit against Russia with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Ukraine accuses Russian authorities of violating the European Convention on Human Rights for invading sovereign Ukrainian land. The complaint concerns human rights violations during the initial stage of the war: from the start of the Russian invasion on February 24 to Russia's actual withdrawal of ground troops from the outskirts of Kyiv and other cities in the north of the country on April 7. The lawsuit has been [accepted](#) for review.

Ukrainian Justice Minister Denis Maluska [noted](#) that as part of the lawsuit, Ukraine is demanding the complete withdrawal of Russian troops and an award of monetary compensation to victims of Russian aggression.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation [urges](#) Ukrainian citizens affected by Russian aggression to submit [online applications](#) to the ECHR.

THE LARGEST PRISONER EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE, THE UN HAS NO ACCESS TO THEM ON RUSSIAN TERRITORY

On June 29, Ukraine [managed](#) to release 144 more servicemen from captivity as part of another exchange. Among those released were 95 defenders of Azovstal.

This exchange was the largest since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion. Another exchange [took place a day earlier](#), during which they managed to return 16 Ukrainian military and one civilian.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights does not have access to places of internment of Ukrainian prisoners of war, in particular in the Russian-occupied part of Donbas, where they are reportedly held in large numbers and tortured, according to a published [report](#) of the UN monitoring mission for February-May this year.

[Rallies](#) in support of Ukrainian prisoners of war are taking place in a number of countries. A photo report from the rehabilitation center, where servicemen who suffered during the defense of Mariupol are being rehabilitated, is [here](#). A story about the conditions of one of the released prisoners of war is [here](#).

RUSSIA KEEPS TRYING TO DRAG BELARUS INTO WAR

On the night of June 25, Russian bombers launched massive strikes on several regions of Ukraine - Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Sumy. Overall, the occupiers fired about [fifty rockets](#) of various types. [According to the Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate](#), this is the first time Russia has carried out an air strike from the territory of Belarus, which might be its way of trying to draw Belarus more actively into the war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [said](#) that these actions strategically do not change anything, but are an argument in negotiations with partners. Russian President Vladimir Putin [said](#) that in the next few months Russia will hand over to Belarus Iskander-M missile systems, which can carry nuclear warheads in particular, as well as modernize Belarusian aircraft to enable them to carry nuclear missiles.