

HIGHLIGHTS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR CHRONICLES

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UKRAINE'S LIBERATION CONTINUES

On October 1, Ukrainian service personnel [liberated](#) the town of Lyman in Donetsk Oblast, which is key to the further de-occupation of Donbas. Prior to this, the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) took five settlements near it. The Ukraine military surrounded around 5000 occupiers, with some of them taken prisoner and others able to break out of the encirclement, a representative of the Eastern Group of AFU troops, Serhiy Cherevaty [reported](#).

Later, the AFU liberated the village of [Torske](#), located between Lyman in Donetsk Oblast, which had been liberated the day before, and the occupied town of Kreminna, Luhansk Oblast.

A [number](#) of settlements in the [north](#) of Kherson Oblast were also liberated. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [said](#) that the success of the de-occupation of Lyman was an indication that the AFU could liberate the territory of Ukraine. [According](#) to US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, Ukraine is making progress on the battlefield and the actions of the AFU have changed the dynamics of combat operations.

Analysts at the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) have [noted](#) that the elite military units used by Russia on the front are not able to thwart the AFU's counteroffensive. And Reuters [calls](#) the AFU's latest success "the biggest breakthrough in the south since the start of the war".

UNITED STATES READY TO ALLOCATE \$1.5 BILLION MONTHLY TO SUPPORT UKRAINE

The heads of nine Central and Eastern European countries - Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, Northern Macedonia and Montenegro - have [called](#) on all NATO members to "significantly increase" military assistance to Ukraine.

Bloomberg [quoted](#) its sources as saying that the USA was ready to allocate \$1.5 billion per month to support Ukraine during the war. Also on 30 September, the US Congress finally [approved](#) a temporary spending bill providing \$12.3 billion in aid to Ukraine.

Germany, Denmark and Norway will [buy](#) 16 Slovak Zuzana-2 Howitzers for Ukraine, while [France](#) is preparing to transfer a number of further CAESAR self-propelled artillery units to Ukraine. [Germany](#) decided to transfer four IRIS-T SLM air defence systems to Ukraine, although only one was [planned](#).

The World Bank has [announced](#) an additional \$530 million to help Ukraine meet urgent needs caused by the Russia-Ukraine war.

RUSSIA ANNEXES OCCUPIED UKRAINIAN TERRITORIES, WORLD DOES NOT RECOGNISE IT

On September 30, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed treaties on the “annexation to Russia” of Ukrainian territories and delivered a [speech](#) consisting entirely of propagandistic [cliches](#), calling on Ukraine to return to negotiations.

The treaties on the “incorporation into Russia” of Ukraine’s temporarily occupied territories were [approved](#) by the Constitutional Court, and the [Russian State Duma](#) and the [Federation Council](#) voted unanimously to annex the so-called L/DPR and the occupied Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts.

Russia’s actions drew sharp international [criticism](#). NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [stressed](#) that what was happening was the single largest attempt to annex European territory by force since the Second World War and that NATO allies did not recognise any part of this land as part of Russia. He called what was happening a demonstration of weakness on Russia’s part, a confirmation that the war was not going according to plan. The European Council [said](#) it would never recognise an illegal annexation, and the decision to do so was legally null and void and of no legal consequence. The US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken [added](#) that Ukraine had every right to defend itself and reclaim the territory seized by Russia. At the UN Security Council, a resolution condemning the pseudo-referendums in Ukraine and calling for the changes to Ukrainian borders to not be recognised was [vetoed](#) by the Russian delegation. The only country in the world to support the results of the “referendums” was North Korea.

Commenting on the annexation, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [stressed](#) that Ukraine would continue working to de-occupy its whole territory and was also ready for dialogue with Russia, but only once there is a new president there. On October 4, a [decision](#) of the Ukrainian National Security and Defense Council on the impossibility of holding negotiations with the Russian incumbent Vladimir Putin came into effect. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry [said](#) that Russia’s actions were legally null and void and did not change the legal status of the temporarily occupied territories as sovereign territories of Ukraine or the internationally recognised borders of the country.

NEW SANCTIONS AMID ANNEXATION

The [USA](#) and the [UK](#) have expanded sanctions against Russia in the wake of its annexation of Ukrainian territory. The US sanctions include 14 entities linked to the Russian military-industrial complex, close relatives of Russian officials and 278 members of the Russian parliament. Among other sanctions, the UK [will ban](#) Russia from accessing the services of its engineering, architectural, auditing, legal and advertising firms.

[Australia](#) imposed financial sanctions and an entry ban on 28 Russian-appointed officials in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, while [Canada](#) expanded sanctions to prohibit certain trade transactions, particularly exports and investments, in addition to individual sanctions. The Finnish government has significantly [restricted](#) the right of Russian citizens to enter the country as tourists.

[Ukraine](#) has also imposed new sanctions on relatives of Russian officials, oligarchs, propagandists, and the top leadership of Russia's armed forces - 1,300 people have been added to the lists, [according](#) to Ekonomichna Pravda's sources.

As a result of the sanctions, Russia's richest people have [lost](#) nearly \$100 billion since the beginning of the year, with more than a third of that loss occurring in the last month.

RUSSIAN MILITARY SHELL TWO CIVILIAN HUMANITARIAN CONVOYS

On September 30, Russian military forces shelled a civilian humanitarian convoy on the outskirts of Zaporizhzhia as people were [queueing](#) to leave for the temporarily occupied territory to collect relatives or bring [aid](#). At least 31 people were [killed](#) and 88 injured.

In the so-called grey zone between occupied Svatove, Luhansk Oblast, and liberated Kupiansk in Kharkiv Oblast, a convoy of civilian vehicles that had been struck by Russian forces in late September was [found](#). At least 24 people [had died](#), including 13 children.

Hromadske [reports](#) on the abduction, killing and torture of civilians in the occupied Kherson Oblast.

UKRAINE APPLIES TO JOIN NATO

On 30 September, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [said](#) that the country was applying for NATO membership on an expedited basis. He also called on international partners to respond to Ukrainian proposals on security guarantees that can be in place as long as Ukraine's accession process to NATO continues.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [did not](#) answer directly whether the alliance was ready to accept Ukraine, but stressed that the alliance's support would continue. [Canada](#), [Lithuania](#), [Latvia](#) and [Estonia](#) expressed support for Ukraine's early accession. For the United States, the application came as a [surprise](#), with officials divided on the matter. For example, Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor to the US President, [believes](#) that the joining process "should start at another time", and that the best way to support Ukraine now is to provide it with practical assistance. The first discussion should [take place](#) on the level of NATO ambassadors.

MATHS TEACHER FREED FROM RUSSIAN DETENTION

On September 29, Ukraine managed to [free](#) six more people from Russian detention, including four service personnel. One of the freed civilians is Viktoria Andrusha, a mathematics teacher who was captured by the occupiers in Chernihiv Region at the end of March. Three more Ukrainian servicemen, who had been hiding with wounds in the occupied territories for about 7 months, were able to [return](#) to Ukrainian-controlled territory. In total, Ukraine managed to [free](#) 235 people from detention in September.

Azovstal defender Mykhailo Dianov, who was released in a previous exchange, [spoke](#) about the conditions of his detention, including the widespread use of torture.

RUSSIA ORGANISED SMUGGLING SCHEME TO EXPORT UKRAINIAN GRAIN, POSSIBLE TURKISH INVOLVEMENT

An Associated Press [investigation](#) has revealed details of a smuggling scheme organised by Russia to export grain from Russia's temporarily occupied territories. Since the start of the full-scale invasion, it has managed to obtain at least \$530 million in this way, which has then been used to finance the war. Russian and Syrian businessmen and state-owned companies are involved in the smuggling, some of which have already been sanctioned by the US and the EU. The authors of the investigation also claim that the recipients of the stolen grain may have included the Turkish authorities, who brokered the agreement that allowed exports to resume.

At the same time, since the beginning of the "grain agreement" Ukraine has [exported](#) 5.7 million tonnes of agricultural products.

AT LEAST 300,000 PEOPLE OPPOSED TO MOBILISATION LEAVE RUSSIA

Those potentially affected by and those opposed to mobilisation continue to leave their country. According to open data, more than 300,000 people have left Russia since the start of mobilisation, Verstka [wrote](#). [According](#) to [Forbes](#) magazine, citing a source in the Russian presidential administration, this figure amounts to at least 600-700,000 people.

Against this background, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu [said](#) that more than 200,000 people have already been drafted into the army.

Meduza [reports](#) on Russians opposed to the war.

DEBUNKING FAKES

THERE ARE NO PLANS TO HOLD REFERENDUMS ON JOINING POLAND IN WESTERN UKRAINE

Against the backdrop of developments with the pseudo-referendums held by Russia in Ukraine's temporarily occupied territories, pro-Russian media have begun to spread reports

([1](#), [2](#).) that other regions of Ukraine allegedly will also join countries bordering Ukraine in the west.

The pro-Russian former Verkhovna Rada MP Illia Kiva, who fled to Russia at the start of the full-scale invasion, claimed that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had confirmed to Polish President Andrzej Duda that the Lviv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts were “ready to hold a referendum” on their accession to Poland. Obviously, these claims are false, designed to divert attention from Russia’s annexation of Ukraine’s occupied territories and to weaken Polish support.

Russian propaganda [has long promoted the narrative](#) that Ukraine will be [divided](#) between different countries, with Poland allegedly [planning](#) to take control of its western regions.

From a legal point of view, organising such “referendums” is impossible: according to the Ukrainian [Constitution](#), questions about territorial changes are decided exclusively by a Ukrainian-wide referendum, not within a single oblast. Furthermore, the layout of the “ballot” for the Lviv Oblast published by the media is similar to the “ballot” for residents of Donbas and the Polish fake news debunking project FakeHunter [outlines](#) signs of its obvious falsification.

Politicians and [media](#) in Poland have also refuted such fakes in their statements. For example, Polish President Andrzej Duda [stressed](#) that he condemned Russia’s organisation of pseudo-referendums in the occupied territories of Ukraine and did not recognise their results. The Polish Plenipotentiary for the Security of Information Space Stanisław Zaryn [said](#) that “Russian propaganda continues its information attacks on Poland, repeating lies about the Polish authorities’ alleged plans to attack Ukraine and annex the Western part of Ukraine”. Poland was also one of nine countries [to sign](#) a call for NATO member to significantly increase military aid to Ukraine. Poland has been a consistent ally of Ukraine in countering the Russian invasion.

The [Stop Fake](#), [FactCheck](#) and [The Insider](#) projects provide more details on this fake news story.