

HIGHLIGHTS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR CHRONICLES

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RUSSIA CONTINUES SHELLING AREAS OF UKRAINE, MORE AIR DEFENCE NEEDED FOR PROTECTION

Active operations continue on various parts of the front, the situation in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts remains difficult. It is most [severe](#) in the Bakhmut area. Russian armed forces are shelling Kyiv, [Dnipropetrovsk](#), [Zaporizhzhia](#), [Kharkiv](#), [Donetsk](#) Oblasts and [western](#) regions of Ukraine. It is predominantly infrastructure facilities and residential buildings that are coming under attack. On [18 October](#) alone, more than 10 Ukrainian regions were struck by the Russian Federation.

Russia continues to use Iranian Shahed-136 kamikaze drones to attack critical infrastructure in Ukrainian cities. Although it has been possible to [destroy](#) most of them, Ukraine needs more Western-style air defence systems to counter them effectively, experts [stress](#).

SUCSESSES OF THE AFU IN KHERSON OBLAST

In the temporarily occupied territories of Kherson Oblast, the Russian occupiers have started [evacuating](#) their “institutions”. All “authorities” in temporarily occupied Kherson are [transferring](#) to the left bank of the Dnipro River, and occupation forces have also [announced](#) their intention to “evacuate” residents of Kherson Oblast to Russia. This is happening against the backdrop of the Ukrainian military’s [success](#) in liberating the region’s settlements. In Kherson Oblast, the Armed Forces of Ukraine had liberated 75 settlements from occupation by 12 October, 29 of them in October. [According](#) to OVA head Yaroslav Yanushevych, the situation in the de-occupied territories is close to a humanitarian disaster:

houses, schools, hospitals, water and lighting have been destroyed. The AFU have [not yet commented](#) on plans to liberate Kherson.

BELARUS CREATES REGIONAL GROUPING OF FORCES WITH RUSSIA

Belarus continues to provide its territory to Russian troops who are shelling Ukraine. Furthermore, the Belarusian Defence Ministry [announced](#) the arrival of the first echelons of Russian troops for the so-called Regional Grouping of Forces. Its [creation](#) was explained by "NATO's military buildup" near Belarus's borders.

PRISONER OF WAR EXCHANGES - FOCUS ON FIRST MEETING OF UKRAINIAN AND RUSSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

A number of prisoner of war exchanges have taken place. As a result of one of them, Ukraine was able to return [20](#) service people, while in the second, [108](#) women, most of them servicewomen, were released. Among those released were prisoners captured before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began. This exchange was the first in which only women were exchanged. Hromadske [published](#) more details, stories of the released people and photos of the exchange.

Also during the exchange, the first meeting of the Ukrainian and Russian human rights commissioners Dmytro [Lubinets](#) and Tatyana [Moskalkova](#) was held and one of the issues discussed was the organisation of further prisoner of war exchanges.

EU SETS UP MILITARY MISSION TO UKRAINE

The EU has announced the creation of a large-scale military mission to Ukraine called [EUMAM Ukraine](#). It will provide individual, collective and specialised training for the AFU, including the Territorial Defence Forces, on the territory of EU member states. The mission's initial mandate is for two years and funding for this period will amount to around 107 million euros.

The [German](#) armed forces command will receive up to 5,000 people for training within the framework of the planned EU mission, and [France](#) will receive up to 2,000 people. The European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell said that the EU will [increase](#) the amount allocated for the AFU to 3 billion euros from the European Peace Facility.

RAMSTEIN MEETING: PARTNERS SUPPORT UKRAINE IN THE LONG TERM

Against the backdrop of mass Russian shelling of Ukraine, which has led to the destruction of energy infrastructure and civilian casualties, a routine meeting of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group (so-called Ramstein format) was held on 12 October. Pentagon Chief Lloyd

Austin [said](#) after the meeting that the partners were ready to support Ukraine in the long term. According to the Head of the Ukrainian Presidential Office, Andrii Yermak, it was historic for Ukraine because decisions were made there to strengthen the Ukrainian air defence system. [Spain](#), other allies and NATO will give Ukraine Hawk, Hawkeye and hundreds of drone jamming devices, while the [Netherlands](#) will donate missiles to bolster its air and missile defences. An equally important achievement is the transition to systematic cooperation: NATO is discussing a ten-year plan to re-equip the Ukrainian army. An [interview](#) with Ukraine's ambassador to NATO, Natalia Halibarenko is published by Hromadske.

MILITARY AID: WINTER UNIFORMS AND SANCTIONED RUSSIAN HELICOPTERS

[Lithuania](#) and [Estonia](#) have approved new military aid packages for Ukraine, which include winter clothes, equipment and ammunition. Among other things, Lithuania will also provide [mortars](#). [Italy](#), [France](#), [the UK](#) and [Portugal](#) are also providing aid and will hand over sanctioned Russian helicopters to Ukraine.

The [USA](#) has announced a new \$725 million military aid package for Ukraine, which will [include](#) ammunition and vehicles. Ukraine will [receive](#) the first of several NASAMS air defence systems from the USA by the end of October. A new military aid package from [Canada](#) will include winter clothing and equipment, artillery shells and communications technology. Possible is also being discussed in Israel: the Minister for Diaspora Affairs [called](#) for military aid to be give to Ukraine following reports that [Iran](#) is planning to supply its missiles to Russia.

[According](#) to German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, the priority for military support to Ukraine now is to strengthen its air defence, so air defence systems are more important than deliveries of German tanks. However, Germany has already [given](#) Ukraine 5 Bergepanzer 2 recovery vehicles, pontoon systems and winter uniforms for the Ukrainian military, and has also [committed](#) to deliver more MARS II multiple rocket launchers and PzH 2000 artillery systems in the coming weeks. Ukraine has [received](#) \$1.3 billion in additional emergency funding from the International Monetary Fund. The money will be used to finance priority needs: strengthening defence capabilities, paying pensions, social programmes and supporting the economy.

PACE DECLARES RUSSIA A TERRORIST REGIME

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has [approved](#) a [resolution](#) declaring Russia a terrorist regime. The document also stressed that there were no legal grounds for Russia's presence in the UN Security Council. The resolution calls on the Council of Europe member states to provide Ukraine with air defence systems, condemn pseudo-referendums in the occupied territories, provide financial support for the reconstruction of Ukraine and ensure a comprehensive system of accountability for gross violations of international law resulting from the aggression. The Estonian parliament also [approved](#) a statement recognising the Russian regime as terrorist.

RUSSIA SAYS IT HAS MOBILISED 222,000 PEOPLE, SECURITY AT MILITARY RECRUITMENT CENTRES IS BEING TIGHTENED

Russia is continuing its “partial mobilisation”. [According](#) to Russian President Vladimir Putin, 222,000 people have been mobilised and all mobilisation measures will be completed within two weeks. At the same time, 33,000 of the mobilised are in units and 16 thousand are on combat operations. Rosgvardiya has been ordered to [tighten](#) security at military recruitment centres in a number of Russian cities because of frequent attacks in the context of the mobilisation.

People spreading information about the war that contradicts the official statements of the Russian Defence Ministry continue to be prosecuted under the “fakes” article, 149 criminal cases have been [initiated](#) against 125 people.

DEBUNKING FAKES

NATO HAS NOT DECLARED ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR ON THE SIDE OF UKRAINE

Russian [media websites](#) have reported that NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has allegedly admitted that the alliance is at war with Russia on the side of Ukraine. In particular, such news articles quote statements by the deputy chairman of the Security Council of Russia, Dmitry [Medvedev](#).

These claims are fake: Jens Stoltenberg, as well as other NATO officials, have repeatedly stressed that NATO is not a party to the conflict, but expressed readiness to support Ukraine in its opposition to Russian aggression for as long as necessary. For example, on 11 October, during a press conference, he [noted](#) that the alliance was not a party to the conflict, but that supporting Ukraine was a key issue for it. And on 30 September, he [confirmed](#) that NATO was not a party to the conflict in Russia’s war against Ukraine, but that NATO allies would not recognise Ukraine’s annexed territories as part of Russia.

It should be noted that Russian presidential spokesman Dmitry [Peskov](#) interpreted Jens Stoltenberg’s words about Ukraine’s defeat in a full-scale war against Russia, which would also be a defeat for NATO, as a confirmation of the Alliance’s involvement in the war on the side of Ukraine. However, Jens Stoltenberg went on to [elaborate](#): if Ukraine is defeated, the world will become more vulnerable to further Russian aggression, so it is crucial for NATO as a [defence alliance](#) to [support](#) Ukraine. Dmitry Peskov, on the other hand, when asked by a journalist whether Russia would take any action in this regard, replied that “it has been taking action since 24 February”, thus confirming that Russia had and still considers military action against Ukraine to be a war against NATO from the outset. At the same time, this [narrative](#) is used to explain to Russian society why Russia’s plans for a rapid “special military operation to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine”, and, ipso facto, attempts to conquer it, are not justified.