



GLOBAL EYE
INTELLIGENCE

THE KURSK INCURSION

CONFLICT ESCALATION REPORT



OVERVIEW

- On August 7, 2024, Ukrainian forces initiated a notable offensive operation, advancing up to 10 kilometers into Russia's Kursk Oblast. This report provides an overview of the current situation, key developments, and the Kremlin's response to this incursion.
- Geolocated Footage: Ukrainian armored vehicles have reached positions along the 38K-030 route, approximately 10 kilometers from the international border, indicating penetration into at least two Russian defensive lines and a stronghold.
- Territory Seized: Ukrainian forces have captured approximately 45 square kilometers, including 11 settlements such as Nikolaevo-Daryino, Darino, Sverdlikovo, and have operated within Lyubimovka. Reports confirm engagements near the Sudzha-Korenovo highway, with Ukrainian troops reportedly fighting on the outskirts of Korenovo and Sudzha.





KEY DEVELOPMENTS

1. Russian Defensive Actions:

- Seized Positions: Ukrainian forces have captured the Sudzha checkpoint and gas distribution station, taking over 40 Russian POWs.
- Chechen Forces: The Chechen 71st Motorized Rifle Regiment has been deployed to Sudzhenskyi Raion, suffering heavy losses in engagements around Korenovo.

2. Kremlin's Response:

- Public Statements: President Vladimir Putin has condemned the offensive as a "large-scale provocation," directing regional authorities and Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov to coordinate assistance. Despite claims of the situation being under control, significant Ukrainian advances have been acknowledged.



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- **Contradictory Messaging:** The Kremlin is balancing between acknowledging the attack's severity and minimizing domestic panic. Recent statements and modifications to official posts reflect efforts to manage both the international narrative and domestic concerns.

3. Russian Military Command Criticism:

- **Milblogger Reactions:** Russian milbloggers have criticized military leadership for failing to anticipate or counter the Ukrainian advance, citing strategic miscalculations and inadequate responses.

4. Drone Warfare:

- **Ukrainian Drone Capabilities:** Ukrainian forces have employed FPV drones to down Russian Mi-28 and Ka-52 helicopters, indicating advancements in drone warfare tactics and targeting capabilities.



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

5. Strategic Implications:

- Impact on Gas Supplies: The incursion has raised concerns about disruptions to Russian natural gas supplies to Europe, particularly impacting the Sudzha transit hub, with potential economic and energy security repercussions.

- Russian Domestic Concerns: The attack's scale and its implications for critical infrastructure, including the Kursk nuclear power station, have raised significant domestic concerns. The Kremlin's response reflects efforts to assure both military and civilian audiences.

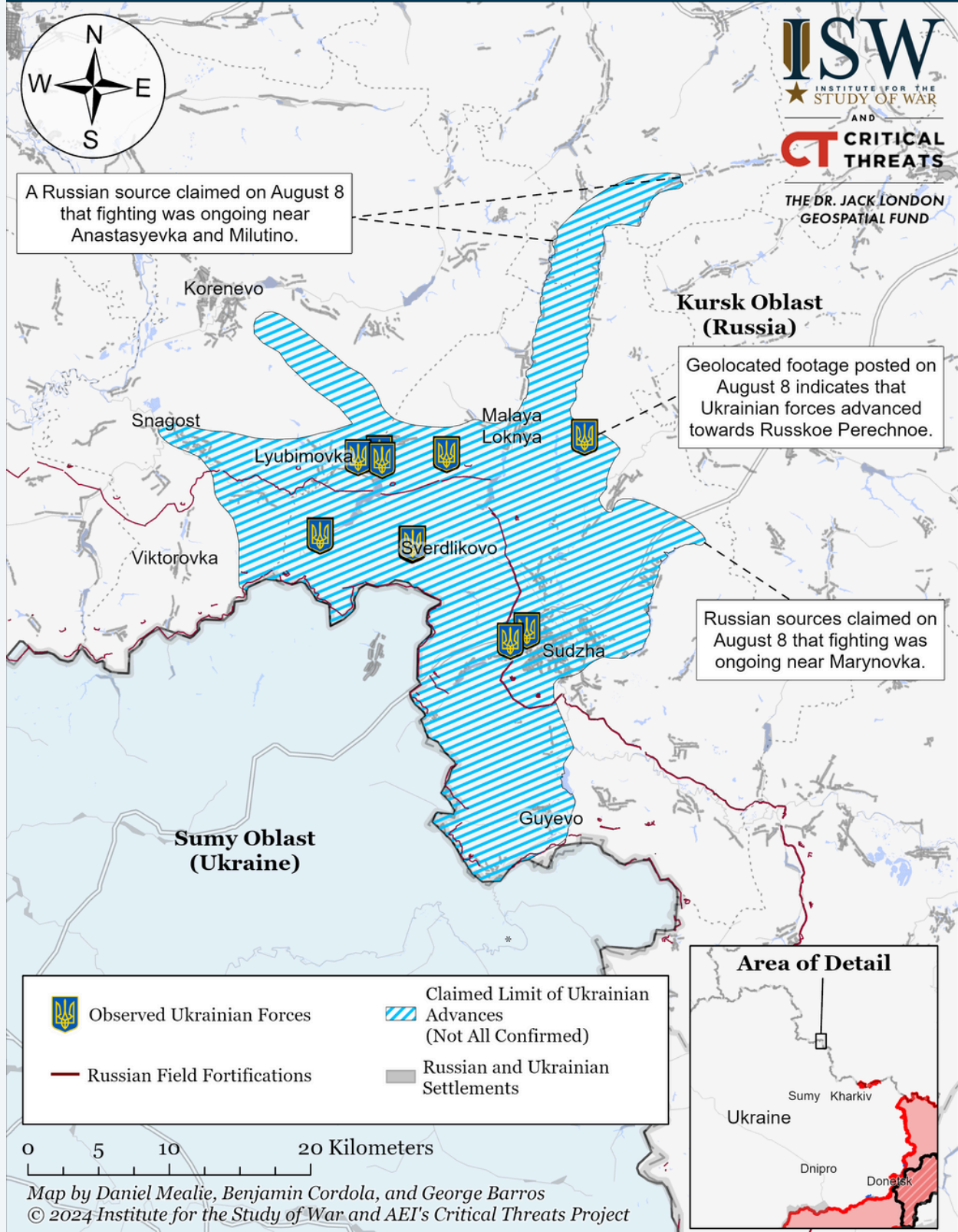
6. Ukrainian Strategic Objectives:

- Distraction and Tactical Gains: The offensive may serve to distract Russian forces from other fronts and could be a precursor to larger strategic goals. The broader effectiveness of this operation is yet to be fully assessed.





Ukrainian Incursion into Kursk Oblast as of August 8, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Note: The Claimed Limit of Ukrainian Advances layer depicts territory that Russian sources claim are Ukrainian-occupied when there is no observed contradictory evidence that could disprove the Russian claims.



Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of August 8, 2024, 3:00 PM ET

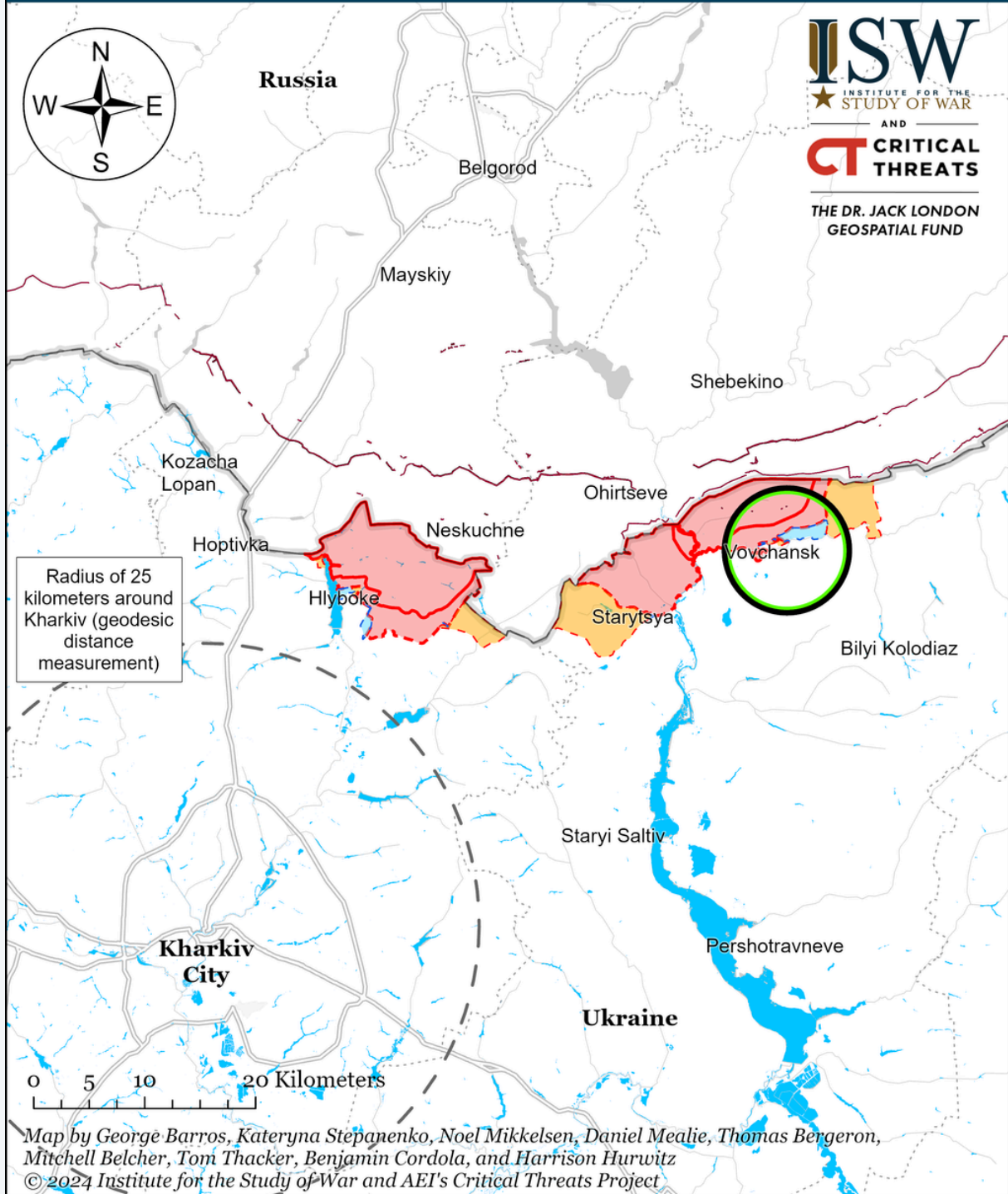


Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Tom Thacker, Benjamin Cordola, and Harrison Hurwitz
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* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.



Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of August 8, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Tom Thacker, Benjamin Cordola, and Harrison Hurwitz
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian Field Fortifications

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

BATTLEFIELD STRATEGIES

Geolocated Footage and Reporting:

- Ukrainian forces have advanced towards areas such as Russkoye Porechnoye and Goncharovka, with conflicting claims from Russian milbloggers about control and presence in these regions.
- Ukrainian forces are conducting operations in various locations, including Novoivanovka and Bogdanovka, with ongoing engagements and advancements reported.

Potential Russian Courses of Action (COAs):

1. Utilize Existing Irregular Forces: Deploy conscripts, FSB border guards, and irregular units to repel Ukrainian forces and secure the border area.
2. Leverage Northern Grouping of Forces: Mobilize and redeploy the Northern Grouping of Forces, which may be strained from previous operations, to counter the Ukrainian advance.



BATTLEFIELD STRATEGIES

3. Redeploy Operational Reserves: Shift operational reserves and more effective frontline units to Kursk Oblast to bolster defenses and counter the Ukrainian offensive.

4. Deploy Aviation and Strike Assets: Enhance defensive capabilities by deploying significant aviation and strike elements to improve counteroffensive operations.

Operational Surprise:

The lack of a coherent Russian response and the reported rapid Ukrainian advance indicate operational surprise, highlighting the ongoing challenge of achieving and maintaining battlefield surprise in a partially transparent environment.



BATTLEFIELD STRATEGIES

Ukrainian and US Responses:

- Ukrainian officials have not directly commented on the operation, but President Zelensky and advisors have acknowledged the ongoing situation.
- US officials have stated that Ukraine's operation complies with US policy, supporting Ukraine's right to defend itself against cross-border attacks.

Russian-Backed Abkhazia Developments:

- Abkhazian Foreign Minister Sergei Shamba has denied plans for a Russian naval base at Ochamchire, contradicting previous statements and reports of ongoing Russian naval activities in the region.

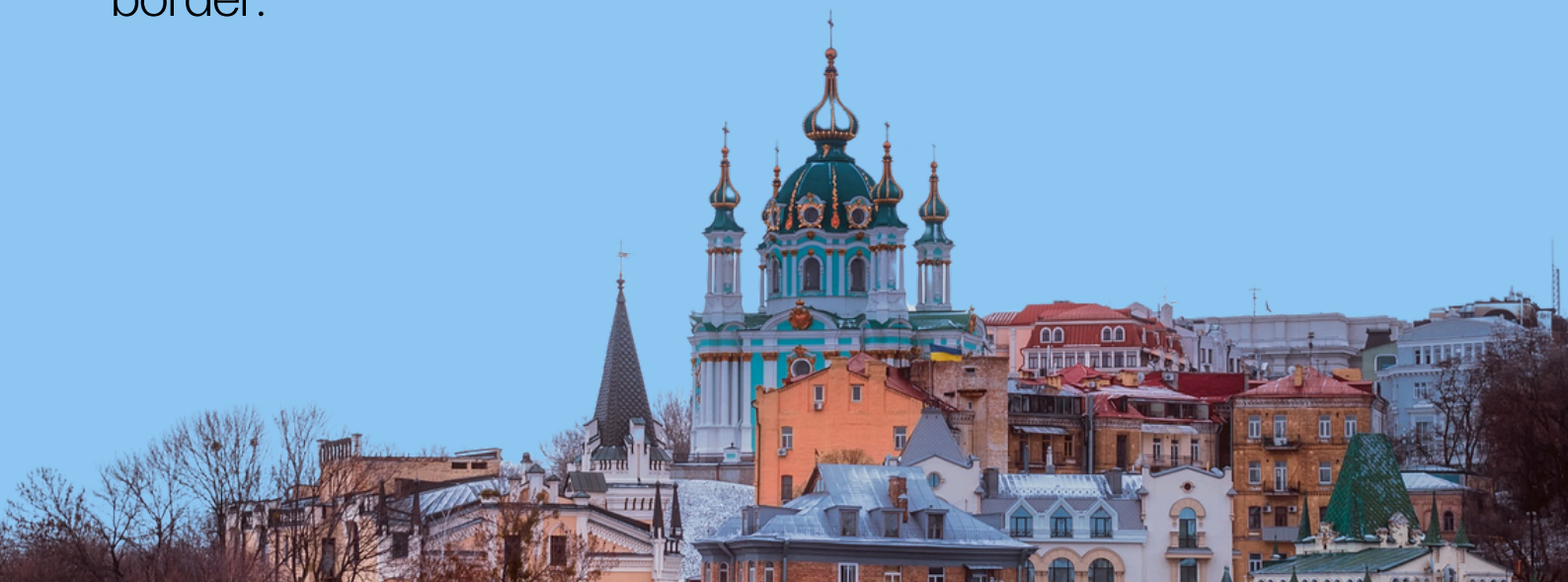




CONCLUSION

The Ukrainian offensive into Kursk Oblast represents a significant operational effort within Russian territory, and the Kremlin's likely response will be crucial in shaping the ongoing conflict dynamics. The operational surprise achieved by Ukrainian forces underscores the challenges both sides face in maintaining battlefield awareness and control.

The Ukrainian incursion into Kursk Oblast represents a significant cross-border operation, with the Kremlin's response highlighting the complexity of managing operational and informational aspects. Ukrainian advances and the use of advanced drone technology reflect shifts in the tactical and strategic landscape. The reported rapid advances further into Kursk Oblast on August 8 suggest a continuing and evolving situation, with Ukrainian forces reportedly present up to 35 kilometers from the international border.





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