



## Situation Room

### **\*\* UKRAINIAN CRISIS \*\***

**Period under review: from 6 November 2022 to 20 November 2022.**

[This report is based on publicly available sources to describe a changing situation. Information subject to change.]

### **Situation analysis recap:**

- Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported on 7 November that the heaviest fighting is occurring in the Donetsk region, where Russian forces are trying to achieve minor territorial gains, specifically around the towns of Bakhmut and Avdiivka.
- President Zelenskyy stated on the same day that Ukraine is ready to negotiate with Russia and resume peace talks, but only when the Russian military withdraws from occupied Ukrainian territories, Russian government pays reparations for the damage caused during the conflict, and when all war criminals are properly prosecuted.
- On 7 November the owner of the Russian private military company Wagner Group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, who is an important figure in President Putin's inner circle, boasted that the Russians interfered in the US presidential elections in 2016, which he repeatedly denied in the past. Prigozhin also ceased to hide the fact that he is the leader of Wagner Group and is gaining more and more influence on the Russian domestic political scene.
- Russian authorities continued with evacuation of Kherson's residents further into Russian territory while their military forces prepared defensive positions around the city in the anticipation of a Ukrainian counter-offensive on 8 November.
- It was confirmed on 8 November that the US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, was back in contact with the Russian officials to lower the risk of a larger conflict between United States and Russia over Ukraine. Both sides also resumed talks over strategic nuclear weapons to deescalate tensions amid Russian threats of using these weapons if the West would try to get actively involved in the Ukrainian war. Washington is supposedly encouraging Ukraine to be more willing to negotiate with Russia.
- On 8 November North Korea denied US claims that it had sent weapons shipments to Russia and that it would not do that in the future. This was the result of White House National Security Spokesperson John Kirby's statement that the North Korean government was supplying artillery shells and rockets to Russia through some Middle Eastern and North African states to cover the transfer. Russia is likely trying to restock its depleted stockpiles of artillery ammunition through this deal since it has used up enormous quantities of munitions during 8 months of fighting in Ukraine.
- Iranian sources stated that the Russian National Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev visited Tehran on 8 November to talk about the sale of Iranian military equipment to Russia, specifically ballistic missiles and Iranian-produced drones such as Shahed-131 and Shahed-136, which were heavily used in recent Russian attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure. Russia's buying of Iranian drones and missiles is likely indicative of the fact that the country is lacking military-grade electronic components to build their own high-precision weapons in Russia due to Western sanctions.
- After days of preparing the defences around Kherson, Russian forces were ordered to retreat from the city and surrounding areas by the Russian defence minister Sergei Shoigu in the wake of the Ukrainian counter-offensive which aimed to liberate the regional capital. The retreat was carried out by the new Russian commander in Ukraine, general Sergei Surovikin.
- After weeks of counter-offensive in southern Ukraine, Ukrainian armed forces liberated the city of Kherson on 11 November. While people were celebrating this moment, President Zelenskyy warned them that they should be careful if Russians retaliate for this strategic victory. The stabilisation operations in the city were conducted on 12 November.

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- Continuing Ukrainian counter-offensive in the south of the country will likely slow down because Ukrainian forces will now have to cross the Dnipro River to continue their advance, which could prove difficult, since the Russians fortified the positions on the eastern bank of the river.
- On 13 November Wagner Group owner Yevgeny Prigozhin demanded that the Russian Prosecutor General's Office start a case against St. Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov after a video of Wagner mercenaries killing one of their own soldiers, presumably a deserter, had emerged online.
- After withdrawing from Kherson, the Russian military conducted one of the largest missile attacks in the recent months, which targeted Ukrainian cities and infrastructure. More than 90 missiles were used in the attack on 15 November.
- The attack happened amid the G20 meeting in Bali where most of the present leaders condemned the Russian war in Ukraine and its consequences. President Zelenskyy also gave a speech during the G20 where he denounced Russia as a member of the group.
- In the same attack, one missile veered off-course and hit a farm on the territory of Poland. It is not completely clear if the missile was part of the Russian arsenal used in the attack, or if it belonged to the Ukrainian anti-missile defence teams which attempted to shoot down the Russian missiles. Western officials stated that the later version of the event is most likely and that this event will not lead to any new tensions between NATO and Russia.
- Up until 20 November, half of Ukrainian energy infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed by Russian missile attacks. Both Ukrainian energy ministry and DTEK, Ukraine's largest private energy company, stated that there is still no reason to panic, and that Ukrainians do not need to leave the country since both military and civilian personnel are constantly working on fixing the energy system.

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