

# WAR ON UKRAINE - Media Insights #9

Between 27 June and 10 July, we monitored Russian state media to detect their main war & propaganda narratives, as well as the independent international media to assess their coverage of the Russian war in Ukraine and anti-war/peace protests.

Welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of our regular newsletter where you will find factual information concerning the Russian war on Ukraine *vis-à-vis* an overview of pro-Kremlin narratives about the war. Our newsletters offer a unique insight into two different worlds – the world of Russian media and how they interpret the ongoing “special military operation” in Ukraine and the world of facts as reported by independent media.

You can subscribe [here](#) to the public newsletter [Media Insights - War on Ukraine](#). All its previous issues can be found on our [website](#). This edition offers these narratives, topics and events.

## Main Events and Updates

From 27 June to 10 July, the monitored **Russian media** reported on:

- The West fuels the military conflict by supplying weapons and is responsible for the death of civilians, The West is actually fighting with Russia using the conflict;
- NATO Summit in Madrid 28-30 June, G20 foreign ministers meeting, the failed boycott of Russia and Lavrov's statements;
- Caspian summit, positioning Russia as a regional power, not in isolation;
- Resignation of UK PM Boris Johnson;
- Liberation of the city of Lysychansk, full liberation of the LNR (Luhansk People's Republic) and the joy of Lysychansk residents;
- Fatigue from Ukrainian refugees in Europe;
- Bucha-2 - Ukraine creates a fake about the attack on a shopping mall in Kremenchuk;
- Crimes of Ukrainian army as an ongoing widely circulated narrative;
- Ukrainian refugees in Russia can obtain citizenship with a fast-track procedure.

During the same period, **international media** coverage of the war focused on:

- G7 annual summit, its statement and decisions;
- NATO Summit in Madrid 28-30 June and formal invitation for Finland and Sweden to join the alliance;
- Russian attack on the shopping center in Kremenchuk, in Odesa and other attacks on civilians;
- The difficult situation in the city of Lysychansk which is under heavy attack from Russian and LNR forces and eventual withdrawal from Lysychansk; Russia is preparing an assault on the Donetsk region, and the mayor of Slovyansk urges residents to flee;
- Russian war crimes and their investigation;
- Default in Russia;
- International conference on reconstruction of Ukraine in Lugano; Military support for Ukraine;
- G20 foreign ministers meeting and Lavrov's statements there;
- Resignation of UK PM Boris Johnson.

# Photos of the Week



*From left to right background: Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Finland's President Sauli Niinisto, Sweden's Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, and Sweden's Foreign Minister Ann Linde pose for a picture after signing a memorandum in which Turkey agrees to Finland and Sweden's membership of the defense alliance in Madrid, Spain, on 28 June (Bernat Armangué/AP, 29 June, [CNN](#))*



Vladimir Putin (far left) at 6<sup>th</sup> Caspian Summit in Ashkhabad (29 June, [Kremlin.ru](http://Kremlin.ru))

## Quotes of the Week

*"This is not a war being waged by Russia against only Ukraine. This is a war for the right to dictate conditions in Europe - for what the future world order will be like,"* Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in an address to NATO Summit. (29 June, [Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com))

*"The West, as usual, underestimates us. Or, more precisely, they are trying to make wishful thinking come true. This is not the first time in our history when we are being pressed by all means. And we have to rely solely on our own resources and intellect. Even in the most difficult times we did not succumb to this pressure, and the Iron Curtain did not become an obstacle for us. And now, I'm sure, it will be the same,"* Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. (28 June, [AiF](https://www.aif.ru))

## Media Insights

### ***What were the main narratives on Russian state media?***

#### **International summits (G7, NATO, G20)**

##### ***G7 has defined Ukraine as a concubine for an indefinite time***

*"The G7 made an unprecedented decision by committing to support Ukraine indefinitely. Kyiv will receive as much as it needs and when it needs it,"* - [writes](https://www.kp.ua) KP. Another question is how taxpayers in all countries of the "Big Seven" will react. They are already beginning to understand that Ukraine is such a very large and very black hole, where no matter how much is sent, everything will eventually



disappear. (26 June, Komsomolskya Pravda)

### ***NATO is a residuum of the Cold War Era***

"The NATO bloc is a residuum of the Cold War era. We were told all the time that NATO had changed, that it was now probably a political alliance. But everybody was looking for a reason and an opportunity to give them a new impetus, precisely as a military organization. And they're doing this," said President Putin asking the questions from "Izvestiya" at the press conference at the Caspian Summit. (29 June, Ren TV). Putin also [claimed](#) that NATO needed an "external enemy" that would allow them to unite all the allies around the goal of fighting this enemy. (29 June, Russia 24)

### ***Putin: Ukraine is being used as a springboard to sway Russia***

Western countries have begun to make Ukraine a springboard to sway Russia. This opinion was expressed by Russian leader Vladimir Putin on June 29 at the Summit of the Caspian Five:

"They started to make Ukraine anti-Russian, a springboard to try to somehow sway Russia itself, they started to fight the Russian culture, the Russian language, they started to persecute people who feel part of the Russian world," he told reporters in Ashgabat. The call for Kyiv to continue fighting only confirms that Ukraine is a means for the West to achieve its own goals, - he added. (29 June, Ren TV). That was said in the context of Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO. Russian President [reiterated](#) that he does not have problems with Sweden and Finland joining NATO - if they want to join, they should go on. (29 June, Russia 24)

### ***If Western countries do not support the negotiation process on Ukraine, then we have nothing to discuss with them - Lavrov***

"If Western countries do not support the negotiation process on Ukraine, then we have nothing to discuss with them," - [said](#) Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov at the G20 foreign minister's summit in Indonesia. He added that the Western countries resorted to fierce criticism of Russia while demonstrating their indifference to the fate of Ukrainian citizens. He once again reiterated that the West is fueling and prolonging the conflict in Ukraine. (8 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

### **The West is fueling the conflict in Ukraine**

#### ***Pumping Ukraine with weapons escalates conflict***

Pumping Ukraine with weapons escalates the conflict in Ukraine, [claimed](#) Anatoliy Antonov, the Russian Ambassador to the USA. The ruling Washington elites are blinded by the idea to weaken Russia and are not able to assess the consequences of their actions. (28 June, Russia 24)

#### ***The West has been doing everything to turn Ukraine into a Russo phobic state for years - Lavrov***

During his visit to Mongolia, Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, [claimed](#) that the West has been doing everything for years to turn Ukraine into a Russo phobic, neo-Nazi state. The West is also doing everything to prevent the functioning of the media that provide objective information. (5 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

#### ***The USA has set course the for the collapse of the global security architecture, and the goals of the special operation will be achieved - Patrushev***

The USA is heading towards the collapse of the global security architecture, and NATO's decision to declare Russia an enemy leads to an escalation of tensions throughout Europe, [said](#) Patrushev, secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. He added: "The spread of neo-Nazism in Ukraine, the operation on its territory of a bio-laboratories involved in the U.S. military biological program, as well as the plans announced by the Kyiv authorities to create nuclear weapons and join

NATO posed significant security threats not only to Russia but also to the entire world. We were forced to take measures to deter the assistance to Ukraine and increasing supplies of lethal weapons, these goals will be achieved." (5 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

**The West should realize its responsibility for the death of civilians in Donbas - Lavrov**

"The West should realize its responsibility for the death of civilians in Donbas and other parts of Ukraine, where the Kyiv regime uses foreign weapons against the civilian population, engaging thus in a state terrorism", [said](#) Russian foreign minister Lavrov during his visit to Vietnam. (6 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

**The events in Ukraine were unleashed by the collective West - Putin**

Vladimir Putin has [accused](#) "the collective West" of unleashing the events in Ukraine. He said that the West did it by "organizing and supporting the unconstitutional armed coup in Ukraine in 2014, and then encouraging and justifying genocide against people in Donbas". (7 July, Ren TV)

**All should know - we have not seriously started yet - Putin**

Commenting on the 'special military operation' in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin [said](#): "We've heard a lot about how the West wants to fight us to the last Ukrainian. This is a tragedy for the Ukrainian people, but it seems to be heading that way". He added: "All should know - we have not started anything in earnest yet". (7 July, Russia 24). Later Putin's press secretary Peskov [commented](#) on these words, saying that the Russian leader reminded Western countries of the incommensurability of Russia's potential. According to him, only an insignificant part of it is used in the military special operation to protect Donbass. (8 July, Ren TV)

**News from the frontline**

**Precision missile strike has destroyed weapons depot in the city of Kremenchuk**

The Russian defense Ministry [said](#) that a missile strike on Monday, 27 June, was aimed at a weapons depot in the city of Kremenchuk, and the damage at the closed shopping mall was caused by a fire triggered by the ammunition explosion. (28 June, Russia 24). Putin has also [commented](#) that there was no terrorist act and no strike in Kremenchuk. He reiterated that the Russian army never strikes civilians, and "does not shoot at fields." (29 June, Russia 24).

[NOTE: There is at least one inconsistency in this report - that the shopping mall was closed. Ukrainian sources' claim that a Russian missile strike hit a crowded shopping mall and caused the death of at least 18 people.]

**The militants have no more chances: The ring around Lysychansk is getting tighter and tighter**

The opponent (the Ukrainian army) has retreated to Lysychansk, and we don't see such a stubborn resistance as it was before. The militants have no more chances, - [says](#) a representative of LNR forces. They also spread leaflets calling for Ukrainian soldiers to surrender and save their own lives. (1 July, Russia 24)

**Shoigu reported to Putin about the liberation of the Luhansk People's Republic**

Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu has [reported](#) to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the liberation of the Luhansk People's Republic. The Russian military and units of the LNR People's Militia established full control over Lysychansk, which had been encircled the day before. Also liberated nearby settlements, including Belaya Gora, Novodruzhevsk, Maloryazantsevo, and Belogorovka. "The total area of territories liberated in the last 24 hours was 182 square kilometers," the Ministry of Defense said in a statement. (3 July, Ren TV)

### ***"Bucha-2" failed: Fake creators who created hysteria around Kremenchuk were left with nothing***

The report by Russia 24 [claims](#) that a video with a missile strike on the shopping mall in Kremenchuk was in fact filmed from the mall, and that there was a strike on the weapons depot behind the mall. Ukraine is trying to create another fake to blame Russia, so it can be called "Bucha-2". A featured military expert Khrolenko claims that the building frame of the shopping mall is intact, and if it were hit by a missile, nothing would be left of it. (29 June, Russia 24)

### ***Russia has left Zmiinyi island as a "goodwill gesture"***

According to the Russian Ministry of Defense representative [Konashenkov](#), Russian armed forces have left Zmiinyi island as a "goodwill gesture". So Russia has demonstrated that it would not prevent the transport of grains from Ukraine. Now it's Ukraine's turn to demine the Black Sea coast. (30 June, NTV)

### **Alleged crimes of Ukrainian army**

#### ***Kyiv regime is trying to create another provocation and leave central Ukraine without electricity***

According to the colonel-general, head of the National Defense Management Center of the Russian Federation Mikhail [Mizintsev](#), the Kyiv regime is trying to create another provocation and leave central Ukraine without electricity. Ukrainian nationalists are stationed at the Krivorozhaska thermal power plant and are systematically shelling the north of the Kherson region, thus provoking Russian armed forces to strike in response. It is also possible that they can blow up the elements of the plant themselves and blame Russia for it. (27 June, Russia 24)

#### ***More than 40,000 shells were fired at the DNR in three months, and increasingly NATO caliber shells***

The Ukrainian army continues to [shell](#) civilians and housing infrastructure in Donbas - more than 40,000 shells were fired at the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) in three months. Every day there are more and more shells of NATO caliber that the West is now supplying to Ukraine. The lives and health of civilians are on the conscience of Western partners, like the one of life 6-year-old Alina who died last week from the wounds received from the shells of NATO caliber. 202 people have died in the last three months. (27 June, Russia 24)

#### ***Fighters returning from Ukrainian captivity told of being tortured by electric shock***

The prisoner exchange 144 for 144, which took place in the Zaporizhzhia region, was the largest in terms of numbers since the start of the special operation in Ukraine. It is [reported](#) that almost all the captives were subject to torture, especially in the Mykolaiv region and in Poltava. They were tortured with electric shock by the Security Service of Ukraine. (30 June, NTV)

#### ***Russian Ministry of Defense: Ukrainian militants copy Nazi tactics***

Ukrainian militants are going to wipe Avdeevka off the face of the earth, [informed](#) the Russian Defense Ministry. Then Colonel General Mikhail Mizintsev added that they plan to blame the Russian army for the destruction of the city: "From the intercepted radio conversations of nationalists and foreign mercenaries, it is reliably established that when the Russian armed forces and DNR formations approach Avdeevka the militants intend to wipe the city off the face of the earth, copying the scorched earth tactics used by the Nazis during the Great Patriotic War. " (29 June, NTV)

#### ***The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation opened a criminal case over the shelling of Belgorod by Ukraine***

The Russian Investigative Committee [opened](#) a criminal case for murder and attempted murder over

the shelling of Belgorod by the Ukrainian military. According to the Investigative Committee, three people died after the shelling (according to the governor of Belgorod Oblast, four people died) and two people are missing, including a child. Four civilians, including a child, were wounded. Thirty-nine private and 11 apartment buildings were damaged and one house was completely destroyed. (3 July, NTV) Earlier Russian Ministry of Defense [reported](#) that the Ukrainian army deliberately shelled the Russian cities Belgorod and Kursk with Tochka-U ballistic missiles. (3 July, Ren TV)

### ***Ukrainian army plans to blow up the thermal power plant and accuse Russia of this accident***

In Nikolayevka (territory of the Donetsk People's Republic), militants [brought](#) tanks with liquid chlorine (over 6,000 liters) to the pumping and filtration plant at the thermal power plant, which they plan to blow up when the allied forces arrive. Thousands of civilians may suffer as a result of the man-made accident. Ukrainian nationalists also plan to accuse Russia of this crime. (6 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

### **Integration of the "liberated" territories into Russia**

#### ***Economic integration of the liberated territories, restoring of bus connection with Crimea and opening of bank branches***

Crimea has [restored](#) a bus connection with Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions - for the first time in 8 years, buses departed from Simferopol to Kherson, Melitopol and Berdiansk. The first branches of the Russian bank Promsvyazbank were opened in Kherson and Melitopol. Smooth economic integration is how experts generally assess Russia's relations with the liberated territories of the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions. There are plans to resume railway communication between these regions and Crimea. (2 July, Russia 24)

#### ***"We used to take water from puddles," Lysychansk residents talk about life under the control of the Ukrainian armed forces***

Residents of the liberated Lysychansk [tell](#) that they were taking water from puddles when the city was under the control of the Ukrainian armed forces. When Ukrainians used to bring water, they just made a "demonstration" for Western media, and residents actually had to wait for this water for 7 hours. A woman featured in the report says: "Ukrainians asked us - are you waiting for the "Russian world"? And we responded - yes, we are waiting for it". (3 July, Ren TV) In another report a crying woman [says](#) about Ukrainians: "They gave us water with one hand and held the trigger with the other.. It's so good that you came, please never leave again!" (3 July, Ren TV)

### **Ukrainian refugees**

#### ***More than 2.3 million refugees from Donbass and Ukraine came to Russia***

More than 2.3 million refugees from Donbass and Ukraine came to Russia. According to the [report](#), they are tired and exhausted from constant shelling. Some of the adults have been already employed, and the schoolchildren from Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics are having a vacation at the Caspian Sea. (7 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

#### ***Ukrainian refugees can obtain Russian citizenship with a fast-track procedure***

Ukrainian refugees in Russia can obtain Russian citizenship with a fast-track procedure, [reports](#) Russia 24. The necessary help to prepare those documents are provided by special consultative centers, one of them in Odintsovo, Moscow region. All the procedures for Ukrainian refugees are free. The report shows refugees from Mariupol who have applied for citizenship. (8 July, Russia 24)

## **Other topics**

### ***More than 70% of Russians expressed support for the special operation in Ukraine***

72% of the polled Russians [said](#) they supported Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to conduct a special operation to protect Donbass. This is stated in a study published by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion. The poll was conducted on April 24, May 12 and 26, and June 12 and 25 among 1,600 Russians. According to the organization's report, public support for the special operation has not changed significantly. (30 June, Ren TV)

### ***The consequences of anti-Russian sanctions: Europeans are forced to save on everything***

Residents of Great Britain, France, and Germany began to sharply save on everything, including food, according to the [report](#) by 1<sup>st</sup> Channel. It cites the article by German "Bild" newspaper where it is said that 91% of Germans started to save money, and 50% claimed their financial situation has worsened this year. Germany may face an extraordinary situation if Russia reduces its gas supplies by 40%. The featured expert, Paul Gembels, claims that "Europe is shooting itself in the leg because all these problems are the result of the anti-Russian sanctions" and that we are witnessing the "suicidal policy in Europe that deprives itself of gas supplies". (7 July, 1<sup>st</sup> Channel)

## ***What did independent media say about the main topics?***

### **International meetings (G7, NATO, G20 Summits)**

#### ***"We will continue to provide financial, humanitarian, military, and diplomatic support and stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes" - G7 leaders***

The G7 Summit leaders [pledged](#) unwavering support to Ukraine - to provide financial, humanitarian, military, and diplomatic support and stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. The statement also demanded the return of Ukrainian citizens taken to Russia against their will and said there could be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocities. It also said Moscow must allow grain shipments to leave Ukraine to avoid a global food crisis. (27 June, DW) It was also reported that in his video call with Summit participants Zelensky [asked](#) to help to end the war before winter when conditions will be worse for his troops. (27 June, DW)

#### ***A More Muscular NATO Emerges as West Confronts Russia and China***

"In a moment when Putin has shattered peace in Europe and attacked the very tenets of the rules-based order, the United States and our allies — we're going to step up," US President Biden [commented](#) on the results of the NATO Summit. The secretary-general of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, announced that thousands of new troops would be deployed in eight countries on NATO's eastern flank. (29 June, NYT)

#### ***Russia is "the most direct threat to security and stability" - NATO***

"The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area," according to a strategic [concept](#) published by the NATO summit in Madrid. It adds that NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to the Russian Federation, and it will continue to respond to Russian threats and hostile actions in a united and responsible way. (29 June, Guardian)

#### ***Lavrov walks out of G20 talks after denying Russia is causing a food crisis***

The Russian foreign minister left the G20 meeting of leading economies early after telling his counterparts that Russia's invasion of [Ukraine](#) was not responsible for a global hunger crisis and that sanctions designed to isolate Russia amounted to a declaration of war. He left when the German foreign minister, Annalena Baerbock, started to speak. Later Baerbock [said](#): "The fact that Lavrov



*spent a large part of the negotiations not in but outside the room underlines that there is not a millimeter of willingness to talk on the Russia side.” (8 July, Guardian)*

## **News from the battlefield**

### ***Ukraine says it has pushed Russian forces from Snake Island***

Ukrainian forces [say](#) they have pushed Russian forces from Snake Island, a strategic Black Sea island off the southern coast near the city of Odesa. If [Ukraine](#) were to retake the island it would weaken any plans Russia may have for a future land attack on that stretch of coastline. Russia, in turn, stated that it had completed its assigned tasks and was tactically withdrawing to allow for grain exports from Ukraine’s Black Sea ports. A Ukrainian soldier posted on the island told an attacking Russian warship to [“go fuck yourself”](#), which has become one of the most popular Ukrainian slogans of resistance since the invasion. (30 June, Guardian)

### ***Ukraine blamed by Russia for deadly blast in border city of Belgorod***

Russia has [accused](#) Ukraine of explosions that reportedly killed three people in the city of Belgorod, near the border with Ukraine. The regional governor said the blasts hit dozens of residential buildings and air defenses had been activated. The Kremlin said that Sunday's attack had been a deliberate attempt by Ukrainian forces to target civilians. However, Ukraine dismissed the claim, saying the Russians had lied about similar incidents in the past. Ukrainian defense ministry spokesman Yuriy Sak told the BBC that previously "our security service has many times intercepted phone calls between the Russian servicemen which prove that sometimes, most often, these types of activities are... provocations by the Russian side themselves". (3 July, BBC)

### ***Russia claims a major victory in Lysychansk, and local people greet Russian soldiers***

Over the weekend, Lysychansk fell to pro-Russian forces. The [report](#) by France 24 shows local residents waving at Russian soldiers as they pass by, and support for Ukrainian troops seems scarce, and many who stayed in the city say they are happy with the course of events. A local woman holding a St. George ribbon in her hands says: *“I wanna shout, shout with joy! I can’t speak for other people, but at least in my circle everyone feels the same”*. Another woman says: *“I think Russians resemble me, and I resemble Russians”*. The report also says that Russian forces bring water and food, trying to win the sympathy of local residents. (4 July, France 24)

*[NOTE: This report deserves special attention as it is a Western media report showing that some local residents are really happy to see the Russian army.]*

### ***Zelensky admits the fall of Lysychansk, but pledges to restore control over the area thanks to the army's tactics and the prospect of new, improved weaponry***

President Volodymyr Zelensky [acknowledged](#) in his video address on Sunday that Ukrainian forces have withdrawn from Lysychansk in Donbas, but vows Ukrainian forces will return there. He emphasized that the withdrawal of forces was aimed to protect the lives of Ukrainian soldiers. (4 July, France 24)

### ***Russia preparing for assault on Donetsk region***

The General Staff of the Ukrainian military [said](#) that after taking over Lysychansk, Russian forces are preparing to continue their move toward cities in Donetsk still controlled by Kyiv. The focus now shifts to the cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk, the two largest population centers in the area. *“In the Sloviansk direction, enemy units are trying to establish control over the settlements of Bohorodychne, Mazanivka, and Dolyna through assault operations,”* the Ukrainian military said in a status update early Monday. (4 July, CNN)

### ***Untrained volunteers are dying in Donbas***

Severe losses of manpower in the Donbas region, where Russia is grinding forward with ferocious bombing and shelling, has forced Ukraine's military to draw reinforcements from the West. Many untrained volunteers from the Western Ukrainian cities who earlier had joined territorial defense forces had headed to the East and died there, writes [New York Times](#). Territorial defense soldiers did not expect that kind of fierce engagement, said one soldier, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive topics. The territorial defense soldiers said they only had rifles, machine guns and a few Western-supplied anti-tank weapons. In short, the soldiers said, they were mostly on their own. *"We are being torn to pieces, people are falling down like flies, and why are we here?"* the soldier said. *"It's unclear."* (July 3, NYT)

### ***Ukraine urges the people of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia to evacuate because of the planned counteroffensive***

Ukraine has warned residents in southern Kherson and Zaporizhzhia to evacuate as it prepares to launch a counteroffensive to retake the area. Late on Friday night, Iryna Vereshchuk, the deputy prime minister for the ministry of reintegration of temporarily occupied territories, called on Ukrainians in the occupied territories to leave by "all means possible". *"You must look for a way to leave because our armed forces will de-occupy. There will be a huge battle. I don't want to scare anyone, everyone understands everything anyway,"* [said](#) Vereshchuk. (9 July, Guardian)

### **Russian war crimes**

#### ***A theatre sheltering civilians destroyed in March in Mariupol was likely hit by a Russian airstrike in a war crime, - Amnesty International***

A theatre sheltering civilians destroyed in March in the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol was likely hit by a Russian airstrike in a war crime, Amnesty International said in a [report](#) published Thursday. *"Until now, we were speaking about an alleged war crime. Now we can clearly say it was one, committed by the Russian armed forces,"* Oksana Pokalchuk, head of Amnesty's Ukraine branch, told AFP. (30 June, France 24)

*[NOTE: Russian media claimed in earlier reports that the explosion in the theater was caused by the mines and explosives planted by Ukrainian soldiers.]*

#### ***[At least 3,924 Ukrainian civilians died in the war](#), - UN***

After visiting numerous bombing sites and detention centers, conducting hundreds of interviews and scouring piles of documents, the United Nations has [put](#) a number to the human cost of Russia's war in Ukraine: at least 3,924 civilians dead as of May 15, of whom 193 were children, and 4,444 injured. The numbers, released in a [report](#) include only those deaths and injuries independently verified by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Deaths and injuries after May 15 have yet to be documented. The true numbers of civilians killed and injured are likely to be far larger.

The war crimes the U.N. report listed included summary executions of civilians, including women and children; mistreatment of prisoners of war; the arbitrary detention and disappearance of local officials, journalists and activists; and extrajudicial punishments meted out to individuals accused of being thieves, bootleggers, drug dealers and curfew violators. (29 June, NYT)

#### ***Victims of rape by Russian soldiers seek justice***

The NYT [report](#) features horrifying stories of the women who were raped by Russian soldiers during the occupation of the Kyiv region. Some of them lost their husbands who were killed by Russians. One story protagonist, Viktoriya, is cooperating with prosecutors because she said she wants the

perpetrators to feel the “lifelong pain” they left her with. *“I want them to be punished,”* she said. Rapes were among [the many atrocities Russian troops inflicted](#) on Ukrainian civilians during weeks of occupation in the Kyiv suburbs and elsewhere. But the challenges of prosecuting the assaults are daunting: Evidence is limited, and the victims are traumatized and sometimes reluctant to testify about their assault, if they even report it at all. The accused soldiers have mostly disappeared.

### ***Hundreds of arbitrary detentions of civilians documented in Ukraine, - the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights***

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, said that hundreds of civilians have been detained in parts of Ukraine held by Russian forces. *“Despite restrictions on access, we have documented 270 cases of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. Eight of the victims were found dead,”* Bachelet [told](#) the Human Rights Council. Russian delegate Evgenyi Ustinov said that the report was part of a disinformation campaign targeting Moscow and was a bid “to cover up the crimes of the Kyiv regime. (5 July, DW)

### ***21,000 alleged war crimes being investigated - Ukrainian prosecutor***

Ukraine says it is investigating more than 21,000 war crimes and crimes of aggression allegedly committed by Russia since the start of its invasion. Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova [told](#) the BBC she was receiving reports of between 200 to 300 war crimes a day. She admitted that many trials would be held in absentia. Earlier in May, Ms. Venediktova said that about 600 suspects had already been identified and 80 prosecutions had begun. (7 July, BBC)

### **Russian attacks on civilians**

#### ***World leaders condemn a Russian attack on Ukraine shopping center***

World leaders have [denounced](#) Russia’s deadly strike on a crowded shopping center in the Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk killing at least 18 people as “abominable” and a war crime. Ukraine’s air force command said Russia hit the mall, located near a railway station, with two X-22 cruise missiles that were fired by an unspecified number of Tu-22M long-range bombers. *“We stand united with Ukraine in mourning the innocent victims of this brutal attack. Indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians constitute a war crime. Putin and those responsible will be held to account,”* the joint statement of G7 said. *“We will not rest until Russia ends its cruel and senseless war on Ukraine.”* In his nightly video address, Zelensky called Russia “the largest terrorist organization in the world”. (28 June, Guardian)

#### ***BBC fact-checking report about the attack on shopping center in Kremenchuk refutes Russian claims***

The fact-checking [report](#) about the attack on the shopping center in Kremenchuk refutes Russian claims, in particular, that the center was not functioning, the bombing of a weapons depot spread fire to the shopping center, and that the attack was 'staged' or a 'provocation'. (30 June, BBC)

#### ***Russian missile strikes kill 20 in Odesa region - emergency service***

At least 20 people, including one child, have died in overnight Russian missile strikes on Ukraine's southern Odesa region, Ukrainian officials [say](#). The state emergency service, DSNS, says 16 people were killed in a nine-story building hit by one missile in the village of Serhiyivka. Another four people, including a child, were killed in a separate strike on a holiday resort in the village. On Friday Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov again denied that Russia was hitting civilian targets. (1 July, BBC)

#### ***At least 15 killed and more than 20 trapped after rocket attack in eastern Ukraine***

At least 15 people have been killed and more than 20 are trapped under the rubble of an apartment

block in eastern [Ukraine](#) that was hit by a Russian rocket attack in the night, as reported by Reuters. The five-story building in the town of Chasiv Yar in the Donetsk region was struck by rockets late on Saturday, the officials [said](#). (10 July, Guardian)

## **Political and military support for Ukraine**

### ***Australian PM visits sites of Russian atrocities and pledges more military aid***

Australia's prime minister, [Anthony Albanese](#), has [pledged](#) more than A\$100m in fresh military aid for Ukraine, after visiting the sites of some of the most infamous atrocities of Russia's war during the final leg of a European tour. Speaking later at a press conference in Kyiv with Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, Albanese said Australia would give [Ukraine](#) 14 more armored personnel carriers and 20 Bushmaster vehicles. (3 July, Guardian)

### ***Over 40 nations sign Lugano recovery conference declaration***

Representatives of over 40 countries along with multilateral organizations such as the European Investment Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) signed the Lugano Declaration outlining a roadmap for Ukraine's recovery. The declaration's focus is on providing Ukraine with political, financial and technical support. Part of the document known as the Lugano Principals will guide reconstruction, which Kyiv pegs currently at an estimated €750 billion (\$773 billion), and also features a plan for domestic reforms in Ukraine. (5 July, DW)

### ***Switzerland resists Ukrainian plan to seize frozen Russian assets***

Ukrainian plans to seize as much as \$500bn (£418bn) in frozen Russian assets to fund the country's recovery have met firm resistance from [Switzerland](#), the hosts of an international two-day Ukraine recovery conference. The Swiss president, Ignazio Cassis, [pushed](#) back on the plan, saying protection of property rights was fundamental in a liberal democracy. (5 July, Guardian)

### ***Ukrainian soldiers arrive in the UK for training with British forces***

British forces have begun training Ukrainian soldiers in a new program to help in their fight against [Russia](#). Up to 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers will arrive in the UK for specialist military training lasting several weeks. The first cohort met the defense secretary, Ben Wallace, on Thursday, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) confirmed. (9 July, Guardian)

## **Other topics**

### ***144 Ukrainian soldiers have been released, including 95 who defended the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol***

Ukraine has [announced](#) the largest exchange of prisoners of war since Russia invaded, securing the release of 144 of its soldiers, including 95 who defended the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol. It added that most of the Ukrainians released had serious injuries, including burns and amputations, and were now receiving medical care. (30 June, Guardian)

### ***Turkey seizes Russian ship carrying 'stolen' Ukrainian grain, but allows it to leave the port***

A Russian-flagged ship carrying thousands of tons of grain is being [held](#) and investigated by Turkish authorities in the Black Sea port of Karasu over claims its cargo was stolen from [Ukraine](#). Turkish customs officials acted after Kyiv claimed the Zhibek Zholy was illegally transporting 7,000 tons of grain out of Russian-occupied Berdiansk, a Ukrainian port in the southeast. (7 July, France 24)



# Anti-war / Peace protests in Russia

In opposition to the official flagships of the Russian mouthpieces, opposition information projects are being launched that are spreading truthful news through social networks. A striking example is an online newspaper [Neutral Zone](#), which publishes news and analysis of the situation.



## Нейтральная зона

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VIEW IN TELEGRAM

Preview channel

### ***The Russian band "Bi-2" released an anti-war music [video](#) for the song "Lullaby"***

The Russian band "Bi-2" released an anti-war music [video](#) for the song "Lullaby" on June 27. In the video, the musician Leva, being blindfolded, is pulling a heavy string of TVs behind him, and Shura is shaving the heads of teenagers. The press release for the premiere of the music video says that "B-2 continues to observe the surrounding reality." (27 June, Meduza)

### ***In Buryatia, the wives of servicemen wrote an appeal to the head of the republic, Alexei Tsydenov, asking him to bring their husbands home***

The servicemen left for "exercises" in January and are now in Ukraine, Vera Partilkhava, one of the participants in the appeal, told Sibir.Realii. "Since February 24 they have been taking part in a special operation. They are exhausted mentally and physically. All of them have light to moderate concussions," the wives of the military say on camera. "Television does not give publicity to this outrage! Everyone is afraid, the command was given to keep silent! Let the death of every military man in this unjust war be on your conscience! We demand our sons and husbands to return home," wrote Vera Partilkhava on her social networks, addressing the head of Buryatia, Alexei Tsydenov. (28 June, [Radio Svodoba](#))

### ***Moscow politician Alexei Gorinov gets 7 years for denouncing war***

A Moscow councilor has been [jailed](#) for seven years for speaking out against Russia's war in Ukraine - in what is said to be the first full jail term under new laws targeting dissent. Alexei Gorinov, 60, was arrested in April after he was filmed criticizing the invasion in a city council meeting. He said there that all the efforts of the civil society should be directed at stopping the war and withdrawing the Russian forces from Ukraine's territory. Under the post-invasion law, anyone who spreads "fake news" about the military faces up to 15 years in jail. Appearing in court in northern Moscow, Gorinov held up a piece of paper with words he had written in pen: "*Do you still need this war?*" A security official held up his hands to try to obscure the message.



(Source: 8 July, BBC)

## **Celebrities against the war**

### ***The frontman of "Imagine Dragons" supports Ukraine***

The 34-year-old American singer and frontman of the band "Imagine Dragons", Dan Reynolds, currently on a world tour with his band, performed at the Opener festival in Poland and supported Ukraine and the people who were forced to flee the war. He [said](#) from the stage: "*Why are children dying in 2022 and we can't stop the war? Why can't we do anything more than sing a song? I feel helpless, I feel hopeless.*" Then he dedicated the song "Forever Young" to Ukraine.

### ***A Polish artist, Jakub Sobszak, painted a mural featuring Ukrainian trident***

Jakub Sobszak painted a mural featuring the Ukrainian trident on a 5-story building in Gdansk.



*(Source - Telegram channel Stop War)*

[Here](#) is the Russian version of the newsletter #9.

## **Thank you for reading our weekly newsletter** **Media Insights - War on Ukraine**

We launched a monitoring project of Russian Federation state TV channels *First Channel, Russia 1, Russia 24, NTV, Ren TV*, online sources *Smotrim.ru, gazeta.ru*, news agencies *Ria Novosti, Interfax, RBC*, newspapers *Rossiyskaya Gazeta [RG], Komsomolskaya Pravda [KP], Argumenty i Fakty [AiF]* and independent international media to evaluate how those news outlets are covering the war in Ukraine and anti-war/peace protests. What does state media propaganda tell Russians about these topics, and how does it compare to the portrayal by independent media outside the country?

Since 23 May, we have been issuing regular weekly newsletters containing the results of our media monitoring, looking at the main propaganda narratives detected on Russian media during the week. This has been complemented by news from independent international media sources to distribute these insights outside the country. The newsletter includes main spotlights from Russian and international news coverage focusing on relevant information, key propaganda and disinformation narratives, statistics, quotes, interviews, expert opinions, independent views, as well as other pertinent developments. All the previous issues of the newsletters can be found on our website.