

Ukraine presents new weapons. Day 1280 of the war

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The situation on the frontline

The Russians have entered more towns in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. Their troop movements suggest that their main task is to outflank the enemy's last positions in the border area of Donetsk Oblast south of Pokrovsk. Ukrainian forces have managed to relatively stabilise the situation in the Pokrovsk conurbation and the front line north of Kamianske in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.

Russian forces pushed the defenders back from the north-western outskirts of Toretsk, which suggests that the fighting for the city, which has been going on since January, has ended. According to some sources, Russia has taken control of most of Serebryanskyy Forest on the border between the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which has been fought over since 2022. The overall situation on the other sections of the front line has not changed, with both sides making territorial gains (according to some reports, the Ukrainians have recaptured Novomykhailivka north of Lyman).

Russian air attacks

On 21 August, the Russians carried out a massive air strike on western Ukraine. Serious damage was caused to the Flex plant in Mukachevo, which supplies microelectronics for Ukrainian drones, among other things, and which is owned by the American company Flextronics. Two Kinzhal hypersonic missiles struck the plant. Twenty-one people were injured, and it took two days to extinguish the fire. The missiles also hit the Elektron plant in Lviv. Lutsk, Rivne and Dubno in Rivne Oblast were also attacked, where fires broke out at the local military air base, as well as railway infrastructure in Zhytomyr Oblast. Some of the drones and missiles struck industrial facilities in Zaporizhzhia and Pavlohrad, where a compressor station was hit (the Ukrainian Ministry of Energy reported cautiously on the attack on the gas transmission infrastructure). According to Ukrainian data, Russia used a total of 574 strike drones and their imitators (the second largest number since the beginning of the attacks) and 40 ballistic and cruise missiles. Ukraine declared that they had neutralised 546 unmanned aerial vehicles and 31 missiles.

The main target of the attacks was Ukraine's logistics to the immediate rear of the front line. Three times (on 21, 24 and 26 August), drones or missiles struck Sumy. Pavlohrad (20 August) and Sloviansk (25 August) were also affected. On 20 August, a fuel depot near the

town of Izmail in Odesa Oblast was hit. Massive, systematic attacks by various types of unmanned aerial vehicles (mainly FPV drones) paralysed the M-14 motorway between Kherson and Mykolaiv, which is the main supply route for the former. In total, from the evening of 19 August to the morning of 26 August, the invaders used 1,006 drones and 51 missiles (including the massive attack on 21 August). Ukraine announced that it had neutralised 861 unmanned aerial vehicles and shot down 34 missiles.

Ukrainian operations against Russia

Ukrainian drones attacked further facilities in the Russian fuel sector. On 20 August, a refinery in Novoshakhtinsk in Rostov Oblast was hit, and the firefighting efforts lasted for the next three days. On 24 August, an oil processing facility at a refinery in Syzran in Samara Oblast and a gas condensate processing facility in the port of Ust-Luga near St. Petersburg were reportedly damaged, and the plant suspended operations as a result of the fire. On 21 August, the Ukrainians once again struck the Unecha distribution station, again halting oil pumping through the Druzhba pipeline. As a result of sabotage, a fuel depot and railway infrastructure in the vicinity of the town of Dzhankoi in occupied Crimea were damaged. In addition, according to a statement by the Ukrainian General Staff, on 21 August, the fuel and lubricants base in Voronezh Oblast was hit. Russian sources, however, reported damage to the energy infrastructure there.

Western support for Ukraine

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, visiting Kyiv on Ukraine's Independence Day, announced his intention to provide \$1 billion in military aid (out of the \$2 billion announced in June this year during the G7 summit). This will include armoured vehicles, ammunition and drones, with deliveries to begin in September. On 25 August, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre declared that his country plans to allocate \$8.5 billion to support Ukraine in 2026. **Oslo announced that it would allocate \$696.3 million to Ukrainian air defence.** Together with Germany, two Patriot missile systems will be financed. It will also invest in the purchase of German radars and Norwegian air defence systems. The British Ministry of Defence announced the extension of training for Ukrainian military personnel as part of the Interflex mission until at least the end of 2026.

The administration of President Donald Trump has agreed to sell Kyiv 3,350 ERAM (Extended Range Attack Munition) air-to-surface guided missiles with a range of 240–450 km. According to The Wall Street Journal, the \$850 million arms package would be financed mainly by European countries. The missiles are expected to arrive in Ukraine in six weeks, but their use requires Pentagon approval. However, a neighbouring article pointed out that for several months, the US Department of Defence has been blocking Kyiv's use of another American weapon capable of striking Russian territory – ATACMS missiles. It cannot be ruled out that the information about the approval of the sale of ERAM missiles is part of Washington's pressure on Moscow.

On 22 August, Poland's Minister of National Defence Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz announced that **a new training camp for Ukrainian and Polish soldiers would be opened in**

southern Poland on 1 September. The initiative is being developed in cooperation with Norway, and construction of the facility began on 14 July and is now nearing completion.

As part of the so-called Czech initiative, Ukraine has received over 1 million pieces of artillery ammunition since the beginning of this year. According to the plan, by the end of 2025, it will receive a total of 1.8 million pieces from 16 countries. According to Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavský, last year, Kyiv received 1.5 million shells from the Czech ammunition initiative, which reduced the disparity in artillery use between Ukraine and Russia fivefold.

Ukraine's military potential

At the end of 2025 or the beginning of 2026, Ukraine will begin mass production of Flamingo surface-to-surface cruise missiles, as announced by President Volodymyr Zelensky on 21 August. Three days earlier, the first photos of the new missile were released, and in the following days, numerous reports on the subject appeared in Ukraine and in the West, citing Ukrainian sources. According to the potential manufacturer, Fire Point, it has a range of 3,000 km and carries a 1,150 kg warhead. The plan is to produce 200 missiles per month. **On Independence Day, the Ukrainians presented a modified R-360 Neptune cruise missile, referred to as Long Neptune, among other things, due to its range being extended to 1,000 km.** Work on it has been ongoing since at least 2023. Unlike its predecessor, an anti-ship missile, it is designed to strike ground targets.

The Flamingo missile was first presented at the beginning of this year as the FP-5 by the Milanion Group, a company registered in the United Arab Emirates, originally operating in Asian markets. It has been cooperating with Ukrainian companies since 2021 and supplies Ukraine with FP-1 strike drones. The declared tactical and technical parameters of the new missile, as well as the production capacity declared by Fire Point (Milanion Group announced 50 units of per month), make the FP-1/Flamingo potentially the most powerful and most widely produced type of manoeuvrable missile in the world (the weight of the warhead in modern manoeuvrable missiles fluctuates around 400 kg, with the exception of the Russian Kh-101, which also has half the range). According to the Ukrainian industry portal Defence Express, it is only possible to achieve these parameters with a large size/weight and maximum simplification of the rocket's design, which resembles American missiles from the 1950s and 1960s.

Due to its design, the FP-1/Flamingo's ability to effectively strike targets deep inside Russian territory is questionable. A large and heavy missile, lacking the STEALTH technology used in today's cruise missiles, would be vulnerable to rapid detection and destruction. It seems unlikely that the number of engines required for the declared scale of production could be obtained. According to Defence Express, it would be necessary to use propulsion units similar to those used in light jet aircraft, such as those manufactured before the war by the Motor Sich plant in Zaporizhzhia. **It cannot be ruled out that reports about the FP-1/Flamingo are part of Kyiv's information policy and are primarily intended to maintain confidence in the capabilities of the Ukrainian arms industry.** It is much more likely that production of the Long Neptune missiles will begin at a rate of several units per month, following the example of other types of missiles produced during the Russian

aggression (despite moving part of the production outside Ukraine, Kyiv has not yet managed to organise large-scale production).

On 20 August, **the Supervisory Board of the Ukrainian Defence Industry (Ukroboronprom) appointed Herman Smetanin, former head of the Ministry of Strategic Industries, as its president.** The recruitment process was conducted by the international company Odgers Berndtson, and Smetanin beat 13 other candidates. After his election, he announced that he would continue to focus on the existing priorities: increasing arms production for the army, fighting corruption and international cooperation. Smetanin had already served as president of Ukroboronprom from June 2023 to September 2024, when he joined the government.

On 21 August, **the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted laws on the implementation of the “Defence City” initiative, aimed at developing the domestic arms industry.** The new regulations introduce a preferential legal regime for companies in the defence-industrial complex until 1 January 2036 or until Ukraine joins the EU. This includes exemption from income tax (subject to reinvestment), land tax, property tax and environmental tax, the simplification of customs and export procedures, and support for the relocation and protection of production facilities. The register of entities will be maintained by the Ministry of Defence.

On the same day, **parliament passed a law restricting public access to the property register during martial law and for one year after its end.** The justification stated that this was done to “increase the security of defence companies’ operations”. The regulation prevents access to information on the location of real estate owned by companies, the cadastral numbers of plots of land owned by legal entities, and intellectual property related to defence and national security. The non-governmental Anti-Corruption Centre pointed out that the regulations will seriously hinder investigative journalists from monitoring cases of corruption, including analysing the assets of public officials. Until now, the register has been used, among other things, to detect suspicious transactions and hidden assets, especially during wartime. Although formally justified on security grounds, the legislation could significantly reduce the transparency of public life, raising serious concerns in the context of the fight against corruption and the financial transparency of the political elite.

On 22 August, **Defence Minister Denys Shmyhal stated that more than 1.3 million Ukrainian citizens have war veteran status.** He emphasised that they play an important role in the state’s defence apparatus. He cited their participation in the development of innovative solutions such as DELTA, an advanced IT system that integrates information about the battlefield situation, as an example of their contribution.

On 24 August, **the Romanian border guard reported that, since the beginning of the year, over 5,400 Ukrainian citizens had crossed the border into Romania illegally.** This is less than in the same period in 2024, when over 7,600 cases were recorded. Ukrainians who have entered Romania in this way can benefit from temporary protection under EU regulations, rather than being treated as illegal migrants.

On the same day, **the Ukrainian border service reported that 911 men attempting to enter Belarus illegally had been detained since the beginning of the year.** Last year, 336 attempts were recorded, in 2023 there were 26, and in 2022 there were 61. Most of them took place in Ukraine’s western oblasts. Since the beginning of the year, a total of over 13,000 Ukrainian citizens attempting to flee the country have been detained at all sections of the border.

The Russian propaganda media is spreading false reports that there have been “1.7 million Ukrainian soldiers killed and missing” since the start of the full-scale invasion. The Ukrainian Centre for Countering Disinformation has strongly refuted these figures, describing them as “an absolutely absurd deception”. It was emphasised that Ukraine has never had an army of 1.7 million soldiers – according to Zelensky, in January this year, the Ukrainian Armed Forces numbered 880,000. Kremlin propaganda claims that this information came from an alleged hack by Russian hackers into the database of the General Staff of Ukraine.

On 21 August, **the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) announced the arrest of a Russian agent operating within the ranks of the Ukrainian Armed Forces’ marines.** He is thought to have transmitted the geolocation data of his own military unit, enabling the correction of Russian shelling, to have assisted in attacks on backup command posts and ammunition depots, and recruited other soldiers.

On 23 August, **activists from the Yellow Ribbon resistance movement hung Ukrainian flags in occupied towns** in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts, as well as in Crimea, **to mark the national holiday.** The organisation was founded in April 2022, and its main task is to organise information campaigns to counter Russian occupation propaganda.

On 25 August, the head of the State Migration Service of Ukraine, Natalya Naumenko, stated that **Ukrainians who were forced to accept Russian citizenship during the occupation are still considered citizens of Ukraine.** Kyiv does not recognise the forced passportisation carried out in the occupied territories. Naumenko added that if someone voluntarily accepted a Russian passport and actively supports Russia’s aggression by working for the occupation authorities or services, they may lose their Ukrainian citizenship. These cases are considered individually on the basis of the evidence gathered and the decisions of the relevant authorities.

