Analyses OSW

CENTRE FOR EASTERN STUDIES 2.09.2025 www.osw.waw.pl

Another massive Russian air strike on Kyiv. Day 1287 of the war

Andrzej Wilk, Piotr Żochowski

The situation on the frontline

Russian forces have captured the last towns south-west of Pokrovsk, which has thus become a direct target for their regular units (previously, sabotage and reconnaissance groups had infiltrated the city). However, Ukraine managed to repel the attempt to invade Myrnohrad from the direction of Novoekonomichne. Their counterattack most likely reached the second of these towns, which led to reports that they had liberated it. Russia captured Komyshuvakha, so the only uninhabited border areas of Donetsk Oblast remain under Ukrainian control between Pokrovsk and Velyka Novosilka. The Russians also pushed Ukraine out of further areas in the region of the Kleban-Bytske reservoir south of Kostiantynivka.

Russia is becoming increasingly active on the border between the Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. It crossed the Zherebets River in Zarichne on the route leading directly to Lyman, which is less than 10 km away. It has also reached the road to this city from the north-west, from Kharkiv Oblast (fighting is ongoing for the key town of Shandryholove). From a breach west of the river, its troops are trying to break through towards Borova in Kharkiv Oblast. At the same time, they have made progress by attacking the city from the north-east, from Luhansk Oblast.

On 28 August, a Russian surface drone sank the Ukrainian reconnaissance ship Simferopol (project 502EM) **in the Danube delta**. According to the Ukrainian Navy command, two sailors were killed, several were wounded, and several more are missing. However, it did not confirm the sinking, only reporting that the strike had caused a breach in the hull and the ship had capsized. This was the first confirmed Russian operation in which it used surface unmanned strike vehicles. In previous years, attacks using such vehicles were the domain of Ukrainian forces, but Russia developed methods to counter them, which limited the role of this category of drones in Ukraine's operations. The last successful strike using these machines against a Russian ship was carried out in March 2024 (resulting in the sinking of the corvette Sergey Kotov).

Russian air attacks

On 28 August, the invaders carried out a massive missile and drone attack, the main target of which was the Ukrainian capital, and it was one of the most tragic for the city. Twenty-five people were killed (including four children), 53 were injured and eight were reported missing. Most of the victims were residents of an apartment block hit by an enemy drone. NASA FIRMS images confirmed extensive fires at the Kyiv Radio Plant. The Artem, Ukrspecsystems and Samsung Ukraine plants were also hit. Numerous civilian buildings were also damaged, including the headquarters of the EU delegation, the European Investment Bank, the British Council, Ukrayinska Pravda and Radio Svoboda.

At least 20 drones and missiles are thought to have hit Kyiv directly. Missiles also hit the railway junction infrastructure (locomotive depot, rolling stock and power substation) in Koziatyn in Vinnytsia Oblast, resulting in the suspension of train traffic and 60,000 consumers being temporarily cut off from electricity supplies.

The attacks also targeted the airports in Starokonstyantyniv and Kolomyia (and, according to some sources, also Myrhorod and Lutsk) and the Baykar corporation plant under construction near Kyiv, where Bayraktar drones, among other things, are to be produced under a Turkish licence (according to MP Ihor Zinkevych, this was the fourth attack on them in the last six months). According to Ukrainian data, Russia used 598 attack drones and their imitators, as well as 31 ballistic and cruise missiles (Ukraine declared that they had neutralised 563 drones and shot down 26 missiles).

During the massive attack on 30 August, Ukraine's rear in the Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts was targeted. Among others, the Motor Sich plant in Zaporizhzhia, the Pivdenmash plant in Dnipro and the chemical plant in Pavlohrad were hit. The greatest damage was reported in Zaporizhzhia, where 12 enemy missiles were said to have fallen. One civilian was killed and 34 were injured. Drones and missiles also struck railway infrastructure in Kyiv Oblast and airports. Russia reportedly used a total of 537 unmanned aerial vehicles and 48 missiles (510 drones were reported to have been neutralised and 38 missiles shot down). Zaporizhzhia was also attacked on 28 and 29 August, Dnipro on 29 August, and Pavlohrad on 31 August.

On 27 August, Russian drones struck Ukrainian energy infrastructure. Towns in the Sumy (including most of the city of Sumy), Poltava and Chernihiv oblasts were temporarily cut off from electricity supplies. In the latter, a comprehensive attack on gas transmission facilities was reported, resulting in "significant damage". According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Energy, damage was also caused in the Kharkiv, Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. As a result of another strike on the energy infrastructure in Sumy on 1 September, electricity and water supplies were cut off again. The Russians attacked the city again the following day.

Damage to substations and other energy facilities also occurred on 31 August in the Chernihiv and Odesa oblasts (30,000 and 29,000 consumers were cut off from electricity, respectively). On 2 September, enemy drones targeted industrial infrastructure in Bila Tserkva and port infrastructure in the Izmail region of the Odesa Oblast. In the morning of that day, Russia attacked Kyiv again. In total, between the evening of 26 August and the morning of 2 September, it used 1,676 unmanned aerial vehicles and 94 missiles (including the massive attacks on 28 and 30 August). Ukraine announced that it had neutralised 1,515 drones and shot down 66 missiles.

Russian operations against Ukraine

On 30 August, Andriy Parubiy, a member of parliament and former chairman (2016–2019) of the Verkhovna Rada, who served as commander of the Maidan self-defence forces in 2014, was shot dead in Lviv. On 1 September, the media reported that a man had been arrested who confessed to the crime and testified that he had acted in concert with "representatives of the Russian Federation". **Investigators suspect that the murder may have been a planned execution inspired by the Russian secret services.**

Ukrainian operations against Russia

Ukrainian drones struck more Russian refineries. On 28 August, facilities in Samara (the Kuibyshev refinery) and Afipsky in Krasnodar Krai were attacked. Fires broke out at both sites, and the former suspended operations. Two days later, unmanned aerial vehicles struck the Krasnodar and Syzran refineries in the Samara Oblast. According to the Ukrainian General Staff, fires broke out at the first facility and in the vicinity of the second. On 1 September, a Ukrainian drone caused a fire at the Kropotkin power substation, which protects the railway infrastructure in Krasnodar Krai.

Ukrainian military intelligence (HUR) reported successful attacks on Russian military facilities in Crimea in the last days of August. As a result of diversionary operations using drones, two Mi-8 transport helicopters were reportedly hit (some sources reported that the second damaged or destroyed helicopter was an Mi-24 combat helicopter), an S-300 radar station (initially reported to be the newer S-400) and a tugboat in Sevastopol. On 28 August, in the Sea of Azov, HUR saboteurs reportedly attacked a Buyan-M missile corvette (the name of the vessel was not disclosed) carrying Kalibr cruise missiles. According to the statement, a drone from the 'Prymary' special unit damaged the radar station, while another group attacked the ship's side. As a result of the damage, it is thought to have left the combat duty area. Apart from the damage to the helicopters, the intelligence reports were not confirmed by other sources.

Western support for Ukraine

The US State Department has agreed to supply Ukraine with 3,350 ERAM (Extended Range Attack Munition) **precision air-to-surface missiles**, which are a depleted and reduced substitute for cruise missiles. The costs of delivery, including additional equipment, spare parts and servicing, amounting to $825 million, are to be covered by the United States from the FMF (Foreign Military Financing) programme, as well as Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway. This is the result of a project launched in 2024, under which the American companies Zone 5 Technologies and CoAspire have committed to supplying lightweight GPS-guided missiles with a range of up to 250 nautical miles (463 km) that could be used as a "smart" replacement for 500-pound (227 kg) aerial bombs, with similar dimensions and weight. These entities proposed the Rusty Dagger and RAACM (Rapidly Adaptable Affordable Cruise Missile) light manoeuvrable missile designs, respectively. CoAspire

emphasised that their missile could be manufactured using 3D printing technology.

ERAMs are not typical manoeuvrable missiles. Considering their overall weight, the warhead will weigh 50–100 kg (there has been false information in the media that the above-mentioned 227 kg refers to the weight of the warhead alone), and the new missile will rather be equivalent to the long-range GLSDB missile, which will be delivered to Ukraine from 2023. The average weight of the warhead of a modern cruise missile is twice that of the entire ERAM for Storm Shadow missiles supplied to Kyiv by France and the United Kingdom it is 450 kg), and its delivery is not expected to significantly increase Ukraine's potential to attack Russia's rear. An additional limitation is that the use of missiles to attack Russian territory is subject to Washington's approval.

The State Department has also approved the provision of military services worth $329.1 million to Ukraine under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme. The first concerns the supply of spare parts and maintenance services for previously delivered Patriot air defence systems worth $179.1 million, and the second concerns the provision of Starlink satellite communications worth $150 million.

In the coming weeks, a Ukrainian defence industry company will launch production in Denmark. This was announced on 29 August by the country's Defence Minister, Troels Lund Poulsen. He described the project as "Danish model 2.0", comparing it to Western funding of the so-called Danish model of arms production in Ukraine. Poulsen recalled that in 2024, Copenhagen allocated €600 million for this purpose, and in the current year it plans to spend €1.4 billion. As **part of the** Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) **mechanism, Belgium will allocate an additional €100 million in military aid to Ukraine,** as announced on 29 August by the head of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, Denys Shmyhal.

On 26 August, the Czech media reported on the transfer of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to HUR, for which a public fundraiser was launched in November 2023. Ukrainian military intelligence had already received several helicopters of this type from other sources.

Ukraine's military potential

On 26 August, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine reported that **since the beginning of the Russian aggression, more than 250,000 criminal proceedings had been initiated for violations of military discipline**. Most of them were related to allegations of unauthorised absence from a unit or place of service (in 2024, over 67,000 such cases were recorded, and in 2025, already 110,000). The increase in the number of cases indicates growing problems with maintaining discipline and a decline in the mental resilience of soldiers. On 28 August, the General Staff and 20 military unit commanders called on parliament to make criminal liability for insubordination stricter. They supported a draft law that would prohibit courts from imposing suspended sentences on soldiers who refuse to follow orders or commit other serious disciplinary offences.

On 26 August, **the Ukrainian government allowed men aged 18 to 22 to freely cross the state border** despite the ongoing martial law. This will be possible without special permits, provided that they have the mandatory document of registration in the military records. Until now, leaving the country was only possible for members of this group in exceptional cases,

e.g. for students of foreign universities, international transport drivers or people with disabilities. It is possible that the government's decision is motivated by a desire to improve relations with citizens of this age. In military terms, it prevents them from being subject to general mobilisation. On 28 August, the State Border Service announced that the introduction of new regulations allowing free travel had not resulted in a significant increase in the number of people leaving the country.

On 27 August, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS) announced that the fewest attempts to cross the border illegally take place on the border with Poland, and the most on the border with Romania. The border with Moldova is in second place, followed by the borders with Hungary and Slovakia. A warning was also issued about the risk of illegal border crossings with Belarus due to the unpredictable behaviour of the border guards there. Every day, the SBGS detains up to ten people at border crossings who are attempting to leave the country using false documents. It also conducts operations aimed at exposing criminal networks and groups organising illegal border crossings (for $5,000–12,000 per person). Since the beginning of 2025, more than 13,000 people have attempted to leave Ukraine illegally.

Russia's military potential

On 1 September, HUR revealed that Russian tank manufacturer Uralvagonzavod uses over 260 foreign industrial devices, including computer-controlled CNC machine tools. The vast majority of the equipment was purchased before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine as part of a long-term programme to modernise the arms industry. The list includes hundreds of technologically advanced European and Asian-made machines that are still used to manufacture tanks and armoured vehicles. This equipment requires regular maintenance, spare parts and software updates.

Despite sanctions, Russia continues to obtain spare parts and machinery through third countries. HUR emphasises that limiting the production capacity of Russia's arms industry requires coordinated international action, such as information sharing between partners, tracking and blocking schemes to circumvent restrictions, and increasing criminal and financial liability for any companies and individuals involved in violating the sanctions regime. The list of foreign components used by the Russian arms industry is regularly updated and can be found on *the War & Sanctions website.*

The war and the internal situation in Russia

On 25 August, the Ukrainian police announced that **since November 2024, when regulations allowing the legalisation of undeclared firearms came into force, Ukrainian citizens had declared possession of over 11,700 such weapons and over 5 million rounds of ammunition.** The process of registering weapons is part of a broader campaign aimed at regulating the legal situation regarding access to them. The relatively small number of registrations is noteworthy – according to earlier estimates by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ukrainians may have as many as 3 million unregistered weapons.


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