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Ukraine

Russian army on the defensive, Ukrainian people on the offensive

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Russia is continuing its war of attrition against the Ukrainian people, but is struggling to make significant progress on the ground. In response, Kyiv is intensifying its strikes against Russian military infrastructure while civil society continues to keep democratic and social mobilizations alive.

On 3 June, Ukrainian missiles hit energy and military sites at the opening of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, where Russia's political and economic elite received their foreign guests under plumes of black smoke. Responding to the deadly attacks of the previous day, Kyiv thumbed its nose at Putin's arrogance while demonstrating its growing ability to break through Russian air defenses.

On 2 and 3 June, hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles reached residential areas in Kyiv, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia (40 dead and 250 injured). Following hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries in April and May, these attacks target homes, civilian infrastructure and public services. Putin is seeking to break the morale of the Ukrainian people. In vain.

Increasing pressure on Russian rear

On Ukrainian soil, the army succeeded in blocking Russia's spring offensive, neutralising attempts to regroup men or equipment. The Russian occupying forces, despite the multiplication of assault operations, made little progress. "600 km² of Ukrainian territory have been liberated since the beginning of the year," said Oleksandr Syrsky, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian armed forces.

For several months, the Ukrainian army has been conducting offensive operations on Russian territory, destroying refineries, industrial facilities, weapons factories and military bases in order to disrupt Russian logistics lines and war capabilities. These strikes, deep into Russian territory and on the rear of the occupied territories, are shaking a civilian economy already weakened by inflation and the war economy.

Kyiv has increased the use of strike systems combining medium-range missiles and combat drones to reach the Russian rear up to 200 kilometers. The Ukrainians are holding important supply routes under constant fire: Crimea is particularly affected, which has consequences for supplies to the southern zone of the fighting. The authorities of Bastopol have limited fuel purchases to twenty litres per vehicle. Prices of food and services are already rising.

The state of the global balance of forces does not currently open up the prospect of a victorious offensive on the ground. By multiplying devastating air incursions, the Ukrainian leadership is forcing Moscow to come to the negotiating table from a more balanced position.

A committed and combative society

Ukrainian civil society, which is very involved in the defence of the country, is active and vigilant (fighting against corruption and oligarchs, defending living and working conditions). After the demonstrations in May against the draft of the new Civil Code (which infringes on the rights of sexual minorities and allows the plundering of common goods),

two examples of struggle illustrate the permanent mobilization, despite the state of war, of citizens.

In Kyiv, during the public discussion on public transport, the Kyiv Passengers Association, which organises quality checks on the routes and even discusses the choice of vehicles, gathered the opinion of almost 1,500 people opposed to the quadrupling of prices. The student union Priama Diia has joined this struggle, denouncing a new blow to students.

Teachers and parents of students in Rivne, in northwestern Ukraine, are opposing the closure of several schools. The soldiers on the front, from their city, sent a video of support. The municipality backed down.

Despite the war, despite the mourning and fatigue, civil society, committed and concerned about the future of the country, is speaking out publicly about the economic, political and legal orientations that are dangerous for the rule of law, social and democratic achievements — essential battles for the reconstruction of the country once it has regained its democratic sovereignty.

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Translated by *International Viewpoint* from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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