

# Global Security Threats 2023

June 8, 2023

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# Roadmap

- Russia's Invasion of Ukraine
- Iran and North Korea
- The South China Sea
- Taiwan
- Ranking the Threats

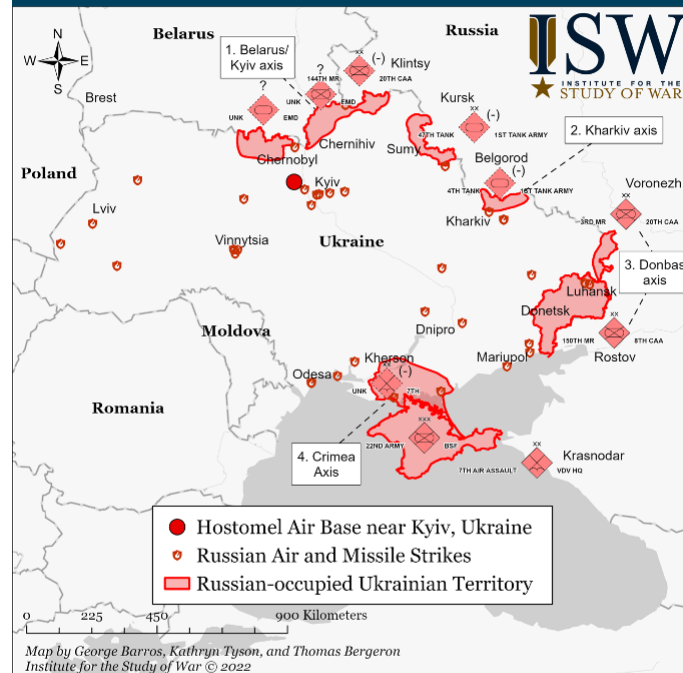
# Russia's Plan in February 2022



# Plans vs. Reality

- Deception efforts failed
- Some initial gains on multiple fronts
- Ukrainian forces organizing and regrouping

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of February 24, 2022, 2:00 PM EST



### Confirmed Russian Units:

Unidentified elements of the 423rd Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 4th Tank Division, 1st Tank Army, attacked Kharkiv Oblast from Belgorod, Russia.

A reconnaissance platoon of the 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 41st Combined Arms Army attacked Chernihiv Oblast from Bryansk, Russia.

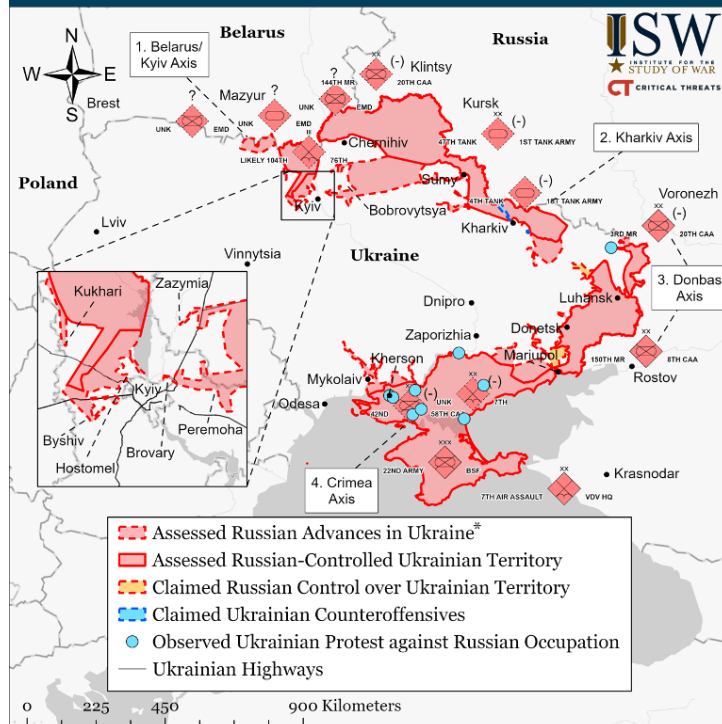
Unidentified elements, likely of the 7th Airborne Division and likely reinforced with 22nd Army Corps and 58th Combined Arms Army elements, attacked Kherson Oblast from Crimea.

Unidentified airborne elements, likely of the 31st Air Assault Brigade, attacked the Antonov Airport outside Kyiv.

# Plans vs. Reality

- Ukrainian defense lines stabilize
- High Ukrainian resolve

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 11, 2022, 3:00 PM EST



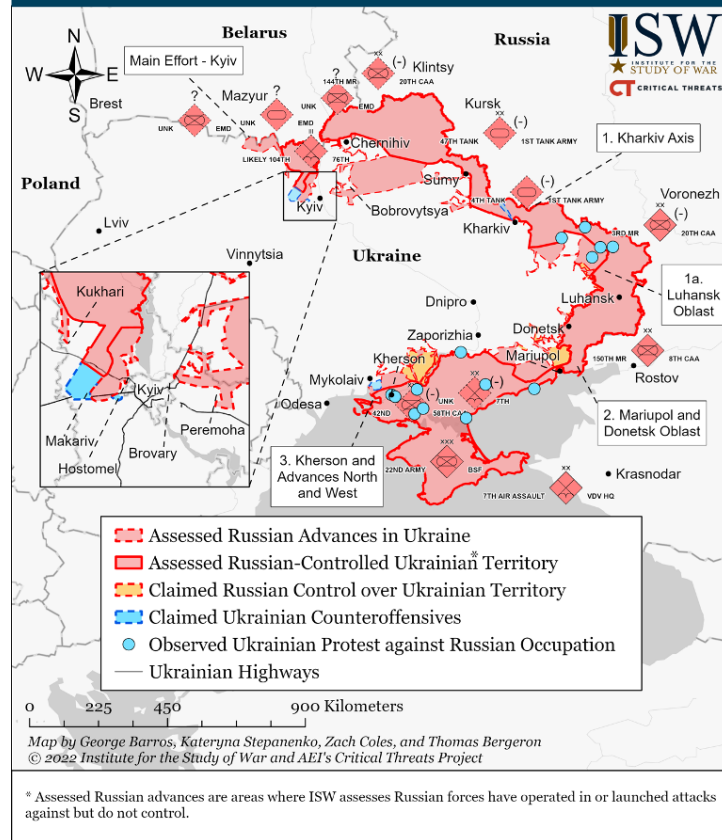
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Kathryn Tyson, and Thomas Bergeron  
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\* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

# Plans vs. Reality

Successful defense of Kiev against expectations

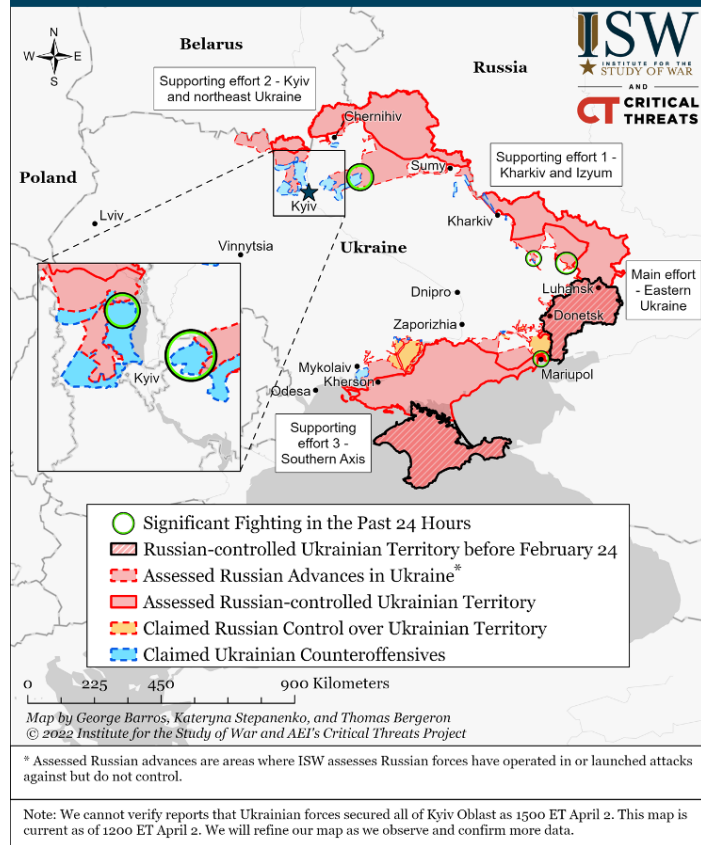
## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 24, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



# Plans vs. Reality

- Russian logistics failures become evident
- Stranded troops and columns, gasoline shortages
- Growing Ukrainian counter-offensives north of Kiev

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of April 02, 2022, 12:00 PM ET



# Plans vs. Reality

- Massive NATO supply effort underway
- Economic sanctions affecting homefront
- Successful push back to borders in the north and closure of Belarusian front

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of April 11, 2022, 3:00 PM ET





# Plans vs. Reality

- Sweden and Finland apply for NATO membership
- Retaking of Kharkiv

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of May 11, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



# Plans vs. Reality

- Significant progress retaking Donetsk Oblast
- Recapture of Kherson

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of December 31, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



# Expectations

- Short-term: Stalemate will be broken by UKR counter-offensive
- Medium-term: F-16s will help establish air superiority
- Continued internal tensions in Russia will undermine effectiveness

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of May 23, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kielm, and Mitchell Belcher - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

\* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

# Iran

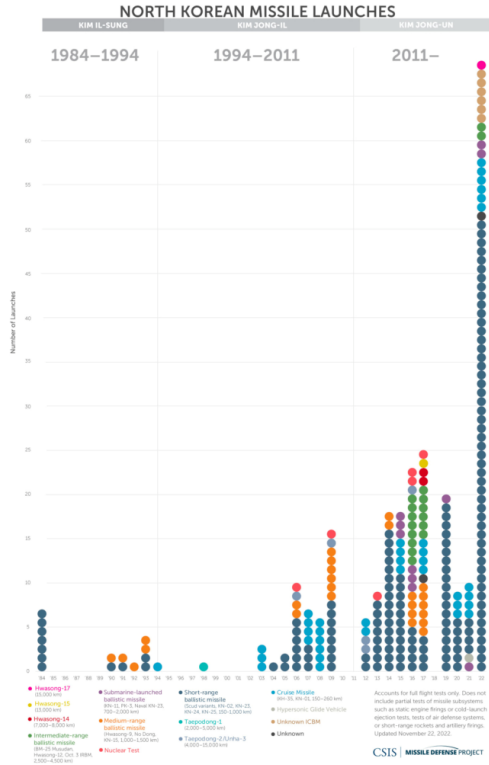
- Following U.S. withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal in 2018, U.S. imposed banking, air travel, and business relationship sanctions focusing on ending Iran's oil sales.
- China, Turkey, and others continued to buy Iranian oil.
- U.S. drone killed Iran's General Qasem Soleimani in 2020
- Russia-Iran relations steadily warming

# Escalating Tensions

- Enrichment of uranium to 20% HEU
- Seizure of S. Korean ship
- Naval exercises simulating attack on Israeli ship, base
- Provision of drones to Russia for use in Ukraine
- May seek foreign diversion for domestic reasons



# North Korea



# Diversification of Capabilities

- Continuing build-up (“exponential increase”) of intermediate-range nuclear-capable missiles
- Development and mass production of tactical nuclear weapons paired with new multiple-rocket launch systems (MRLs)
- Improvement of longest-range ICBMs
- Moving beyond proving the existence of its small nuclear arsenal and toward building a comprehensive, diverse nuclear program hardened against attack



# The South China Sea Dispute

- Resources
  - Oil
  - Natural Gas
  - Rare Earth Elements
  - Fish
    - 1/3 of marine biodiversity, 10% of world's catch
- South China Sea is the connector of two global sea routes
  - Half the annual world merchant fleet tonnage travels through these straits
  - 1/3 of all maritime traffic travels through the straits of the South China Sea





November 23, 2016



CSIS/AMTI DigitalGlobe

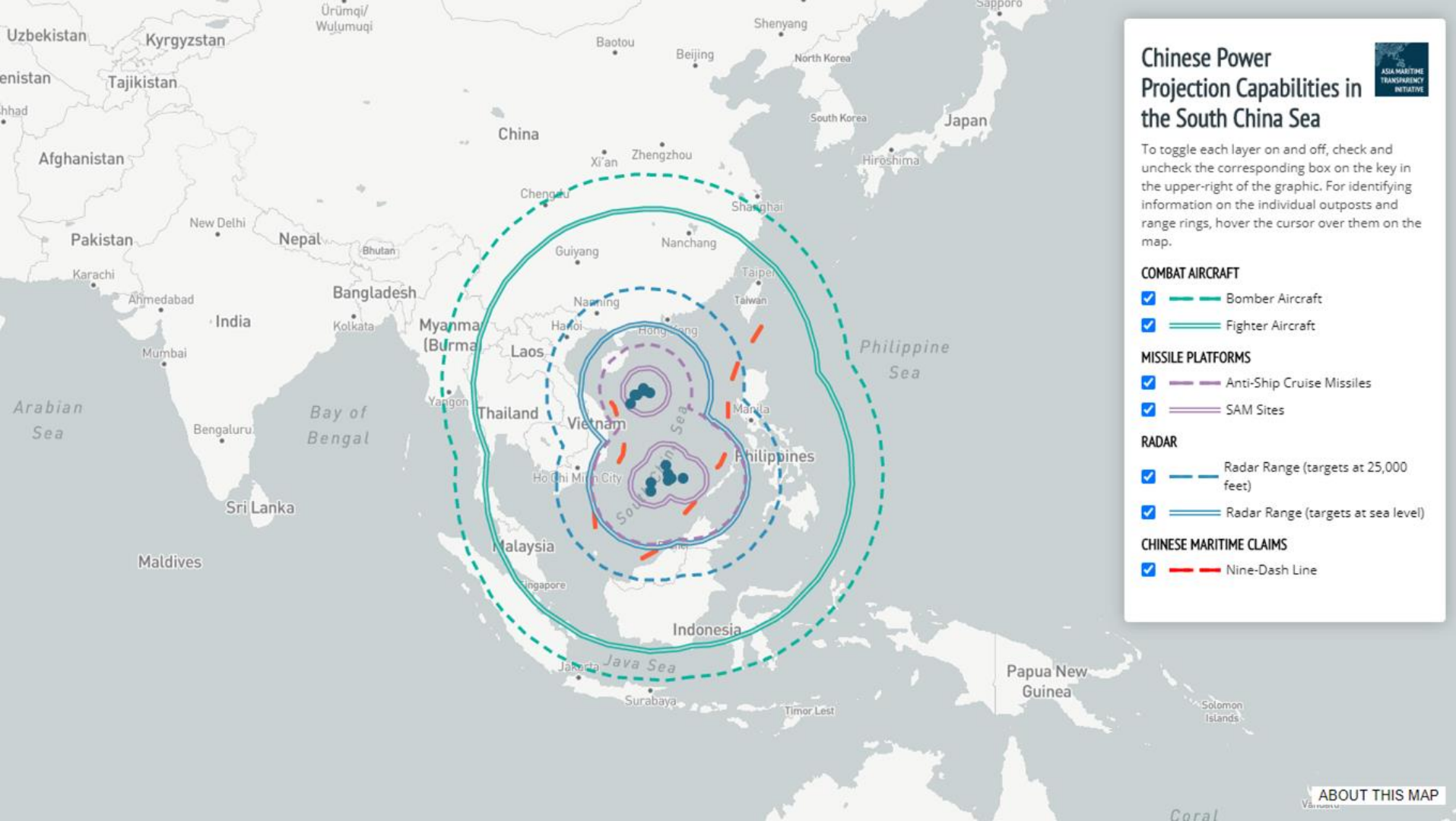
### FIERY CROSS REEF

June 3, 2016



CSIS/AMTI DigitalGlobe  
© CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative / DigitalGlobe





# Chinese Power Projection Capabilities in the South China Sea



To toggle each layer on and off, check and uncheck the corresponding box on the key in the upper-right of the graphic. For identifying information on the individual outposts and range rings, hover the cursor over them on the map.

### COMBAT AIRCRAFT

- Bomber Aircraft
- Fighter Aircraft

### MISSILE PLATFORMS

- Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles
- SAM Sites

### RADAR

- Radar Range (targets at 25,000 feet)
- Radar Range (targets at sea level)

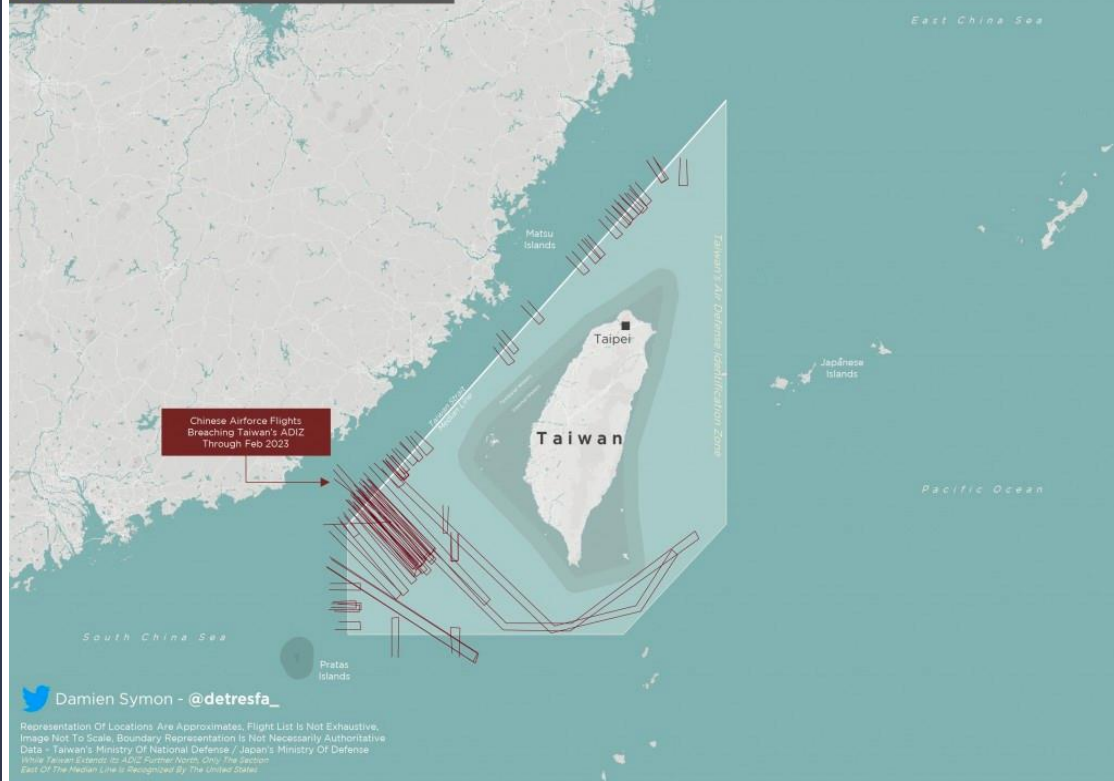
### CHINESE MARITIME CLAIMS

- Nine-Dash Line

# Taiwan

- ADIZ incursions increased by 3x 2021-22
- Chinese ships sailing close to Guam
- High-profile U.S. diplomatic visits break decades of precedent
- Taiwan's universal draft increased from 4 months to 1 year
- New anti-tank weapons sales approved

## Notable Chinese Flight Incursions / Patterns Taiwan - February 2023



# Challenges for China

- The PLA's limited amphibious capabilities
- Wave heights on the Taiwanese coast
- Narrow landing beaches
- Choke points on approaches to cities
- Excellent Taiwanese air force
- Potential for U.S. intervention