

# Ukrainian UAF Persistent Shelling of Donbass Infrastructure and Civilians

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*Ukrainian security forces shelled the territory of the self-proclaimed Lugansk People's Republic 19 times over the past day, RIA Novosti reports from the headquarters of the LPR People's Militia. "From June 27th to June 28th, 2016, 19 instances of shelling by the UAF were recorded in the LPR," the LRP People's Militia reported. According to this source, the most intensive shelling, featuring mortars from 82 to 120 mm calibre, infantry fighting vehicles and anti-aircraft installations, hit the positions of the People's Militia in the Kalinovo, Veselogorovka, and Zolotoye-6 districts.*

Cities of the Donetsk People's Republic also found themselves under Ukrainian shelling last night. The city administration stated that on the night of June 28th, Ukrainian security forces shelled the Kuibyshev district of Donetsk, damaging five houses and a gas pipeline. According to the administration, however, there were no victims.

Such information once again confirms that Ukraine is openly violating the principles of the Minsk Agreements. The government and military leadership of Ukraine have chosen the tactic of "neither war nor peace." Without venturing on an open and full-scale offensive, Ukrainian army units and fighters of the so-called volunteer battalions daily open fire on the territories of the unrecognized republics of Donbass. They are also seizing the neutral territories ("gray zones") designated by the OSCE mission as the demarcation line.



What is the point of such tactics?

These attacks cause harm to the armed forces of the self-proclaimed republics of Donbass, and such strikes are hitting the infrastructure of the republics and the defense systems of Donbass' cities. These bombardments have a serious psychological impact on the civilian population of the DPR and LPR, and people get used to living in an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. What's more, no one can say how much longer this situation will last.

Psychologically, uncertainty wears one down the most of all. As our sources in the DPR have reported, sometimes during serious shelling, many people run out of their homes and rejoice: finally, Ukrainian troops have begun an offensive! This means that militiamen and the peaceful population of Donbass are ready in advance to accept the inevitable losses associated with an offensive. They dream of quickly putting an end to this situation of uncertainty. Everyone in Donbass is sure that the next offensive by Ukrainian troops will end in their complete routing, which will be followed by a counter-offensive of the armies of the DPR and LPR that will liberate the cities of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics seized by Ukrainian troops.

Kiev is perfectly aware of the fatality of an offensive. Such would lead to military defeat and draw international condemnation of Ukraine. Thus, Ukrainian authorities have opted for the tactic of destroying the infrastructure and civilian population of Donbass without formally discarding the Minsk Agreements. The Donbass republics argue that the OSCE mission turns a blind eye to the numerous and daily violations of the ceasefire, thus giving confidence to the Ukrainian side and allowing it to employ the tactic of wearing down and bleeding out the enemy over a long period of time.

Translated by J. Arnoldski

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