

News From Ukraine



By: Robert Homans & Bohdan Chomiak

Anders Aslund vs. Serge Schmemann

I've placed Anders Aslund's name first because he's the plaintiff in this dispute.

4 days ago the New York Times posted an editorial by Serge Schmemann, former Moscow Bureau Chief and member of the NY Times' Editorial Board, entitled "[Ukraine Doesn't Need All Its Territory to Defeat Putin](#)." The title is incorrect; it's necessary to replace "Putin" with "Russia." It's Russians who are fighting in Ukraine, and it's Russians who support their country's policy toward Ukraine, in large numbers. Using "Putin" instead of "Russia," also suggests that if only Putin wasn't around, Russia would turn into a benign country willing to be friends with its neighbors, including Ukraine. To put it mildly, that is wishful thinking.

Yesterday, in the Kyiv Post, Anders Aslund wrote brilliant rejoinder to Serge Schmemann, entitled "[New York Times Editorial Board Very Wrong](#)," calling Schmemann's arguments "absurd, incomprehensive and downright wrong," which in my opinion they are. In addition to being correct, I found Anders Aslund's piece rather amusing, describing Schmemann as a "hereditary Russian nobleman," and "a great Russian aristocratic imperialist." I have great respect for observers like Anders Aslund, who can brilliantly skewer their protagonists.

I'm not going to get into the debate between Schmemann and Aslund. People can draw their own opinions. I will say that 3 members of the New

York Times Editorial Board get my emails, including Schmemann, and they have been getting them since at least 2015. I do remember having correspondence with Schmemann, having to do with a difference of opinion, but I forget what it was about. Judging from much of the New York Times' coverage of Ukraine, going back to at least 2005, I've done a very poor job in changing their minds.

It is likely that Schmemann has guided the New York Times' entire coverage of Ukraine since Ukraine's independence in 1991, or at least influenced it. Some examples:

- Taking several years for the New York Times to embrace the correct spelling of Ukraine's capital – Kyiv. Ambassador Bill Taylor once said that it took the U.S. State Department almost the entire time that he served as U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, to get his superiors to change the spelling to Kyiv. It took the New York Times far longer, often accompanied by lame excuses, including that they didn't want to confuse their readers.
- Until recently the New York Times covered Ukraine from its Moscow Bureau, with predictable results in terms of the slant of their coverage. Not long ago, after Russia's latest invasion began, the Times decided to move Andrew Kramer, their long-time Moscow Bureau Chief, to Kyiv. In my opinion that was a journalistic version of moving the fox into the henhouse.
- Articles such as the recent one covering Ukraine's lodgment on the Left Bank of the Dnipro, near Krinky, describing Ukrainian troops fighting there as "demoralized." This article has been proven to be complete bunk, mostly by Ukrainian correspondents and bloggers. If Krinky is so unimportant to Ukraine, then why did Ukraine move a Patriot missile battery into Kherson Oblast, where it shot down 3 Russian Su-34 bombers on a mission to drop glide bombs on Ukrainian troops around Krinky? As they have often done, the reporter for the New York Times missed the story.

In his Kyiv Post Op-Ed, Anders Aslund mentioned the New York Times' "Stalinist Moscow bureau chief Walter Duranty" who, in the 1930s, attempted to cover up the Holodomor. I thought about Duranty just yesterday, when I was writing about the recent "Almost Naked" party held in Moscow. As portrayed in the movie "[Mr. Jones](#)," about Gareth Jones who, despite Duranty trying to stop him, bought the Holodomor to the world's attention. As portrayed by a scene in "Mr. Jones," Duranty was famous for hosting parties similar to "Almost Naked" at his Moscow apartment.

Good for Anders Aslund. No one should be surprised by the position Schmemann took in his Editorial. It is an extension of the New York Times' coverage of Ukraine that goes back as far as the early 1930s.

News From the Battlefield

["Reporting From Ukraine"](#) covers yesterday's Ukrainian strike against the City of Belgorod, and the latest failed Russian assault on Avdiivka (4:20 into the video). He said that the destruction inside the City was caused by mistakes made by the Russians in their air defense (corroborated by Russian sources), and that Russians placed some of their missile launchers behind the City, using a modified human shield strategy similar to what Hamas uses in Gaza. President Zelenskyy has said that if Russia resumes missile strikes on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, similar to last year, that Ukraine will respond. If Russians are surprised by this, they should call 1-800-KREMLIN.

12/31/2023 Sitrep

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>SITUATION UPDATE OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF UKRAINIAN ARMED FORCES DECEMBER 28, 2023</u></p>
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<p>During the day of December 30, there were 54x combat engagements. The enemy launched a total of 9x missile and 55x air strikes, 79x MLRS attacks at the positions of Ukrainian troops and various settlements. The Russian occupiers attacked Ukraine yet again, firing Kh-59 guided missiles at the cities of Dnipro and Odesa, 1x Iskander missile at Zaporizhzhia, and S-300</p>
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anti-aircraft guided missiles at civilian targets in the central part of Kharkiv. Ukrainian air defense destroyed 1x Kh-59 guided missile.

Last night, the Russian occupiers launched yet another attack on Ukraine, using Shahed-136/131 UAVs. The Ukrainian defenders destroyed 21x strike UAVs.

Air strikes hit Arkhypivka (Chernihiv oblast), Tovstodubove (Sumy oblast), Synkivka, Pishchane (Kharkiv oblast), Novoselivske, Stelmakhivka, Nadiya, Bilohorivka (Luhansk oblast), Avdiivka, Novomykhailivka, Staromaiorske (Donetsk oblast), Tyahynka, and Kherson (Kherson region).

Around 150x settlements in Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, and Mykolaiv oblasts came under artillery fire.

Pivnich operational-strategic group, Volyn and Polissya axes: no significant changes.

Sivershchyna and Slobozhanshchyna axes: the adversary maintains its military presence in the areas of Russia bordering Ukraine.

Khortytsia operational-strategic group, Kupyansk axis: Ukrainian defenders repelled 8x enemy attacks in the vicinities of the settlement of Synkivka (Kharkiv oblast). The enemy made unsuccessful attempts to break through the defense of Ukrainian troops in that area.

Lyman axis: the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled 2x attacks of the adversary near Makiivka (Luhansk oblast).

Bakhmut axis: the Ukrainian troops repelled 9x attacks of the occupiers near Bohdanivka, Klishchiivka, and Andriivka (Donetsk oblast).

Tavria operational-strategic group, Avdiivka axis: the Ukrainian defenders continue to hold back the enemy who keeps trying to encircle Avdiivka. The Ukrainian soldiers are standing their ground and inflicting major losses on the invaders. For instance, the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled 5x enemy attacks near Stepove, Avdiivka, and 13x more attacks near Pervomaiske and Nevelske (Donetsk oblast).

Maryinka axis: the Ukrainian Defense Forces continue to hold back the enemy in the vicinities of Krasnohorivka, Maryinka, and Novomykhailivka (Donetsk oblast). The Ukrainian defenders repelled 8x attacks in that area.

Shakhtarske axis: the Ukrainian troops repelled 2x adversary attack near Pryyutne (Zaporizhzhia oblast).

Zaporizhzhia axis: the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled 4x attacks of the occupiers west of Verbove and east of Kopani (Zaporizhzhia oblast).

Odesa operational-strategic group, Kherson axis: the Ukrainian troops continue to expand the bridgehead. Despite significant losses, the enemy does not abandon its intention to dislodge Ukrainian troops from their positions. For instance, the adversary made 13x unsuccessful attempts to assault the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces.

During the day of December 30, Ukrainian Air Force launched air strikes on 11x concentrations of troops, weapons and military equipment, and 3x anti-aircraft missile systems of the adversary.

The Ukrainian missile troops hit 3x concentrations of troops, weapons and military equipment, 7x artillery systems, and 3x electronic warfare stations of the russian invaders.

INTERNATIONAL

8:00 AM: The Biden administration has approved a \$150 million arms sale to Israel, including shells and other equipment.

8:00 AM: Iran-backed Iraqi militants have claimed responsibility for a missile attack on a US military base in northeastern Syria, — Xinhua.

1:29 PM: Poland continues to check whether elements of the missile fell on its territory.

- This was reported on the page of the Operational Command of the Armed Forces of Poland.
- On December 30, a ground search for "possible elements of the object" that violated Polish airspace during Russia's massive attack on

Ukrainian cities in the morning of December 29 will be conducted on the territory of the Lublin Voivodeship.

NATIONAL

8:51 AM: "Dragon's teeth" are being installed in the border areas of the Northern Operational Zone, — Joint Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

- These are tetrahedrons - anti-tank concrete barrier elements that are included in the defense system of platoon strongholds.

10:04 AM: During the night, 5 out of 10 Kamikadze Drone were destroyed - Air Force of the ZSU.

- The drones were shot down within Mykolaiv, Kherson and Khmelnytskyi regions. The main blow was the front-line zone of the Kherson region.

10:36 AM: All of Ukraine - missile danger! The takeoff of the MiG-31K from the Mozdok airfield (North Caucasus) was recorded, — Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

1:41 PM: As of December 30, there is no shortage of electricity in Ukraine's energy system.

- The Ministry of Energy reported this on Facebook.
- "The energy system is balanced. There are 2 units of TPP and gas station power in the reserve. Power outage schedules do not apply," the agency said.

2:43 PM: Work to eliminate the consequences of yesterday's Russian attack is still ongoing, almost 120 towns and villages have been affected.

- This was reported by Volodymyr Zelenskyi.
- "_A total of 159 people were injured as a result of this attack by terrorists. Among them, unfortunately, 39 have died so far_" writes Zelenskyi.

3:28 PM: The threat of using ballistic weapons in the areas where the air alert has been declared — PS ZSU.

4:34 PM: From January 1, 50 more complexes of automatic recording of traffic violations will start operating on the roads of Ukraine.

- This was announced by the first deputy chief of the Patrol Police Department, Oleksiy Biloshitskyi.
- 19 complexes were working before the full-scale invasion and will now resume their work, and another 31 control devices will work for the first time.

5:27 PM: The density of mine-explosive barriers in the north of Ukraine has been increased 16 times.

- This was reported by the press service of the Joint Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.
- Anti-tank minefields were created, sets of anti-personnel explosive devices, landmines, minefields and other things were installed.

6:12 PM: Volodymyr Zelenskyy held the final meeting of the Stavka.

6:49 PM: The movement of the UAV from the north-eastern direction was recorded. A threat to the Sumy region.

7:50 PM: The Armed Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine inform about the movement of attack UAVs:

- From the Black Sea in the direction of Odesa;
- On the border of Sumy and Chernihiv regions, heading west;
- Part of the UAV in the Sumy region changed course to the south;
- UAV from Kherson region, north-west course (Kryvyi Rih).

8:16 PM: Summary of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine as of 18:00 on December 30

- _49 combat clashes_ took place during the day. In total, the enemy launched 3 missile and 36 air strikes, carried out 31 shellings.

- The Russian occupiers once again attacked Ukraine, using X-59 guided missiles on the cities of Dnipro and Odesa and the Iskander missile on Zaporizhzhia. The Kh-59 guided missile was destroyed by the forces and means of air defense.
- During the day, our aircraft struck 11 areas of concentration of enemy personnel.
- Units of the missile forces hit 3 air defense systems, an area for the concentration of personnel, weapons and military equipment, 7 artillery pieces and 3 radio electronic warfare stations of the enemy.

8:34 PM: Air Force reports movement of strike UAVs:

- UAV in the north-western part of Poltava region, course south-west.
- Another group of Kamikadze Drone crosses the border of the Sumy region.
- Unmanned aerial vehicle in the Zaporizhzhia region, course south-west.
- Kamikadze Drone in Mykolaiv region (Ochakiv), north-western course.

9:00 PM: The Air Force reports the movement of strike UAVs:

- UAV in Chernihiv region, course west. Threat to Kyiv region.
- The next group of Kamikadze Drone is moving in the north-eastern part of the Sumy region, heading west.
- Unmanned aerial vehicle in the Kryvorizka district, heading north-west.
- UAV along the border of the Mykolaiv/Odesa regions, heading north-west. The threat of Odesa region.

10:42 PM: The Air Force reports the movement of strike UAVs:

- UAV from Cherkasy region, course west (Vinnytsia region).
- UAV over the territory of Zhytomyr region, south-west course (Novograd-Volynskyi).
- Kamikadze Drone through the Mykolaiv region, heading west.

- The next group of attack UAVs is probably "Shahed" from the Black Sea in the direction of Odesa.

11:12 PM: The Cabinet of Ministers adopted a resolution expanding the list of state bodies that can purchase goods, works and services for the construction of fortifications.

- _"The resolution improves the process of financing construction by paying an advance of up to 70% of the cost of works under the contract. This will help builders erect fortifications quickly and where it is needed," - writes the Ministry of Defense.

11:21 PM: The Air Force reports the movement of strike UAVs:

- From the Vinnytsia region, the west course (Starokostyantyniv).
- UAV over the territory of Cherkasy region, course to Vinnytsia.
- The threat of attack UAVs remains for Rivne, Zhytomyr, Khmelnytskyi, Vinnytsia, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Odesa, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk regions.

11:35 PM: The Air Force reports the danger of UAVs for the Ternopil region.

- There is a missile hazard in the Kyiv region.
- The Air Force clarified that the alarm in the Kyiv region is related to a change in the trajectory of the UAV.

11:54 PM: Ukrainian sniper Vyacheslav Kovalskyi of the 13th Main Directorate of Military Counterintelligence of the SBU recently made a record shot - he hit the enemy from a distance of almost 4 kilometers.

- _"The unique Volodar Obriyu rifle, the developer of which is Brigadier General of the SBU "Hunter", in the hands of an experienced sniper, a real Cossack and a warrior, is the key to the Service's record-breaking and accurate shots. And such shots bring our Victory closer every day" _ - noted the Head of the SBU, Vasyl Baby.

MORDOR – ruZZia

8:00 AM: The Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation claims that 32 drones were allegedly shot down this night over the territories of Bryansk, Oryol, Kursk and Moscow regions.

8:00 AM: Russia is not capable of regularly attacking Ukraine with missiles on the scale of December 29, — ISW.

8:30 AM: Today in the Black Sea there are 8 Russian ships, including 3 carriers of "Calibre" cruise missiles, a total salvo of up to 16 missiles, — the Navy of Ukraine.

- 1 ship in the Sea of Azov; in the Mediterranean Sea, 3 ships, including 2 carriers of "Caliber" cruise missiles, a total salvo of up to 16 missiles.
- 9:26 AM Social Networks: An explosion is heard in temporarily occupied Sevastopol.

11:40 AM: the Russians have concentrated about 19,000 troops near the border with Ukraine, — the press service of the Joint Forces Command of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

- the Russians continue their aggression against Ukrainians in the territories of Bryansk, Kursk and Belgorod regions.
- _"To fulfill these tasks, the aggressor country has deployed a group of troops armed with tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery and missile equipment, air defense equipment and operational-tactical missile systems," the message says.

2:14 PM Social Networks: Reports of "arrivals" in Russian Belgorod.

3:45 PM: Russia will need 5-10 years to rebuild highly professional and experienced units, British intelligence.

- British intelligence notes that in 2023, average daily Russian losses in both killed and wounded rose to nearly 300 per day.

3:55 PM: Six people died in Belgorod, 24 others were injured.

- This is reported by rosZMI with reference to emergency services.

- nine adults and one child were killed, 45 people were injured, the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia.
- _During war, it is impossible to verify some information that the aggressor spreads. Treat her with care._

REGIONS

KYIV



10:51 AM: The number of people killed because of the attack on the capital on December 29 has increased to 13 people, Kyiv Mayor Vitaliy Klitschko said.

- The bodies of four more victims were recovered from the rubble of a warehouse in the Shevchenkiv district.

12:29 PM: 15 people have already died as a result of the attack on the capital on December 29, Kyiv Mayor Vitaliy Klitschko said.

- The bodies of two more victims were recovered from the rubble of a warehouse in the Shevchenkiv district. Rescuers continue to clear the debris.

12:42 PM: The number of dead in Kyiv has increased to 16, — KMVA.

- Rescuers found another body under the rubble. The search and rescue operation is ongoing.
- January 1 will be declared a day of mourning in Kyiv, Mayor Vitaly Klychko announced.

9:21 PM: Air defense forces are operating in the Kyiv region, Regional Military Administration reported.

10:02 PM: The police awarded a Kyivan who drove a burning car away from a parking lot in Sviatoshynsky district the other day.

- The man received burns, but saved people's cars from the fire.

10:48 PM: Rescuers discovered one more dead person, KMVA reported.

- Seventeen people have already died in Kyiv as a result of the Russian attack.

CHERNIHIV



6:58 PM: The Russian army shelled Semenivka in Chernihiv Oblast, a 32-year-old local resident, OVA, was killed.

- More than 30 houses and other civil infrastructure were damaged.

KHARKIV



7:00 PM Social Networks: An explosion is heard in Kharkiv.

- the mayor of the city Igor Terekhov confirmed the explosion.

7:05 PM Social Networks: Repeated explosions are heard in Kharkiv.

7:58 PM: According to preliminary data, as a result of shelling in Kharkiv, 4 people were injured, the police of the Kharkiv region.

8:02 PM: At this moment, doctors are providing assistance to 8 victims, all of them are hospitalized, 4 people are in moderate condition, 4 are in light condition, reported the head of Regional Military Administration Oleg Synegubov.

- "The occupiers hit the central part of the city of Kharkiv. There is damage to the civil infrastructure: a medical institution, multi-apartment residential buildings, shops and other public places, transport. Only civil infrastructure," - he noted.

8:29 PM: Previously, there were no casualties in Kharkiv, the number of injured has increased to 14, the mayor of the city, Ihor Terekhov, said.

8:42 PM: Two powerful explosions were heard in the central part of Kharkiv. One rocket flew into the hotel, the second hit a residential building, also in the center.

- According to the updated data of the local authorities, 16 people were injured, 8 people were hospitalized
- This was announced by the mayor of the city Igor Terekhov.

9:05 PM: Rescuers provided medical assistance to 7 people, including 2 children. Among the injured is a journalist from Great Britain, the Ministry of Internal Affairs reported.

- 8 people were evacuated from the damaged building, handing them over to doctors and psychologists.

DONETSK



5:42 PM: the Russians struck a Combined Heat and Power Plant in Donetsk region - the operation of the facility has been stopped.

- "There were no casualties. At the same time, 16 35 kV substations were de-energized - there are disconnected consumers", - reports the Ministry of Energy.

ZAPORIZHZHIA



10:15 AM: In Zaporizhzhia, the number of victims from yesterday's Russian attack has increased, — Regional Military Administration.

- "An enemy attack took the lives of 9 peaceful Zaporizhia citizens", — head of the Zaporizhia Regional Military Administration Yuriy Malashko.

11:36 AM Social Networks: An explosion is heard in Zaporizhzhia.

12:32 PM: Russians attacked Zaporozhye with one missile, previously Iskander-M, — OVA.

- "Air defense forces neutralized the missile. The remains fell in an open area on the outskirts of the city of Zaporizhzhia", — head of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Military Administration Yuriy Malashko.

4:54 PM: Russians shelled a residential building in the city of Stepanohirsk with multiple rocket launchers, killing a 43-year-old local resident.

- This was announced by the head of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Military Administration Yuriy Malashko.

DNIPRO



11:47 AM: Missile, presumably Kh-59 in the direction of Dnipro, — Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

11:48 AM Social Networks: An explosion is heard in Dnipro.

12:57 PM: PvK "East" shot down a missile over the Dnipro region, reported the head of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Military Administration Serhii Lysak.

KHERSON



9:53 AM: At night in Kherson, the Russians hit the administrative building — it was almost completely destroyed, — Regional Military Administration.

- The city was under attack by Russian-Iranian drones of the "Shahed" type. In the surrounding houses, the blast wave shattered the windows.

3:27 PM: A 55-year-old man died as a result of a Russian strike on Antonivka, Kherson Regional Military Administration.

- At the time of the shelling, he was in the yard of the house.

7:09 PM Social Networks: Explosions are heard in Kherson.

8:53 PM: Russian shelling killed two people in the Kherson community. In the Ship district of Kherson, there is a woman, and in the suburbs, a man, said the head of the MBA Mrochko.

ODESA



4:57 PM: The Air Force reports a missile threat to Odesa region.

5:12 PM Social Networks: An explosion is heard in Odesa region.

5:52 PM: The death toll as a result of yesterday's Russian strikes on Odesa has increased — a 77-year-old man died in the hospital.

- " _He received serious injuries as a result of an enemy rocket hitting a three-story building in the center of Odesa_," reported the head of the OVA Oleg Kiper.

VINNYTSIA



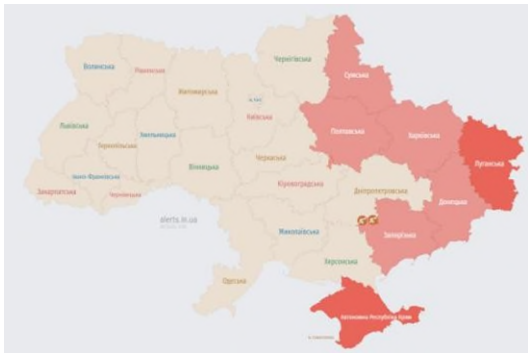
10:06 PM: The Air Force reports that there is a threat of enemy use of attack UAVs in the Vinnytsia region.

KHMELNITSKY

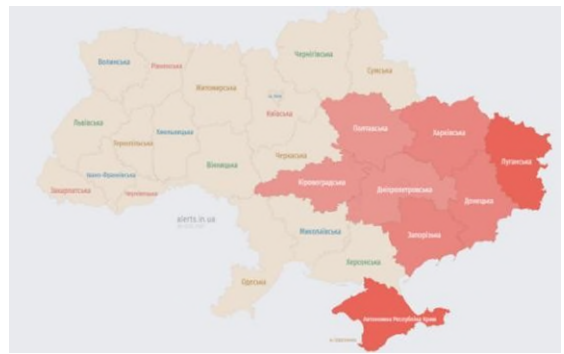


12:14 AM Social Networks: Explosions are heard in Khmelnytskyi region. Previously - air defense work.

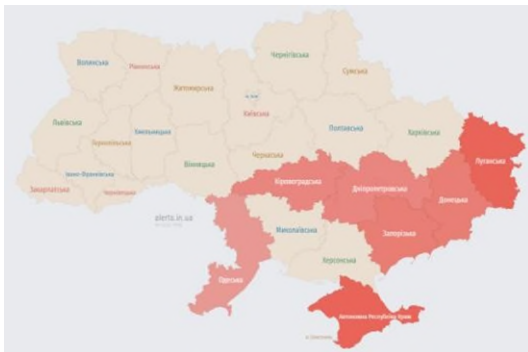
VISUAL CHRONOLOGY OF REGIONAL ROCKET, DRONE, ARTILLERY, MORTAR AND BOMB ALARMS



2:40 PM



3:30 PM



4:50 PM

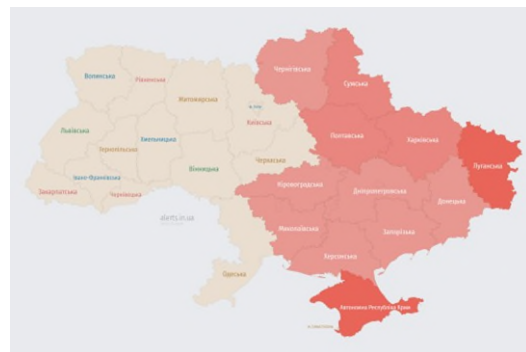


6:30

PM



7:50 PM



8:30

PM



9:00 PM



10:00

PM



10: 40 PM



11:30 PM

Comparing Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to Russian invasion of Ukraine using Wikipedia and Ukraine Ministry of Defense Daily Bulletins. Soviet and Russian military losses not including captured equipment.

	Soviet Afghanistan	Dec 26	Dec 27	Dec 28	Dec 29	Dec 30
Duration	9 years and 9 months	After 671 days	After 672 days	After 673 days	After 674 days	After 675 days
Military Personnel Liquidated	14,453	355,750	356,670	357,520	358,270	359,230

Material Losses

Tanks	147	5913	5940	5953	5969	5977
Armored Personnel Carriers	1,314	10,973	11,015	11,033	11,053	11,070
Artillery, Mortars, and Ballistic Rocket launchers	433	9,310	9,336	9356	9373	9407
Cruise Missiles		1620	1620	1620	1708	1709

Fighters Bombers	118	329	329	329	329	329
Helicopters	333	324	324	324	324	324
Drones		6471	6503	6539	6554	6591
Anti Aircraft Missile Batteries		616	617	620	621	623
Cargo/Fuel/ other transport	11,36 9	11,140	11,180	11,215	11,244	11,292
Naval Vessels		23+(1 submar ine)	23+(1 submar ine)	23+(1 submar ine)	23+(1 submar ine)	23+(1 submar ine)
Special Equipment		1240	1247	1254	1260	1268

SOURCES

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- <https://t.me/uawarinfographics>
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