



Russia uses ageing missiles to draw out Ukrainian air defenses

Description

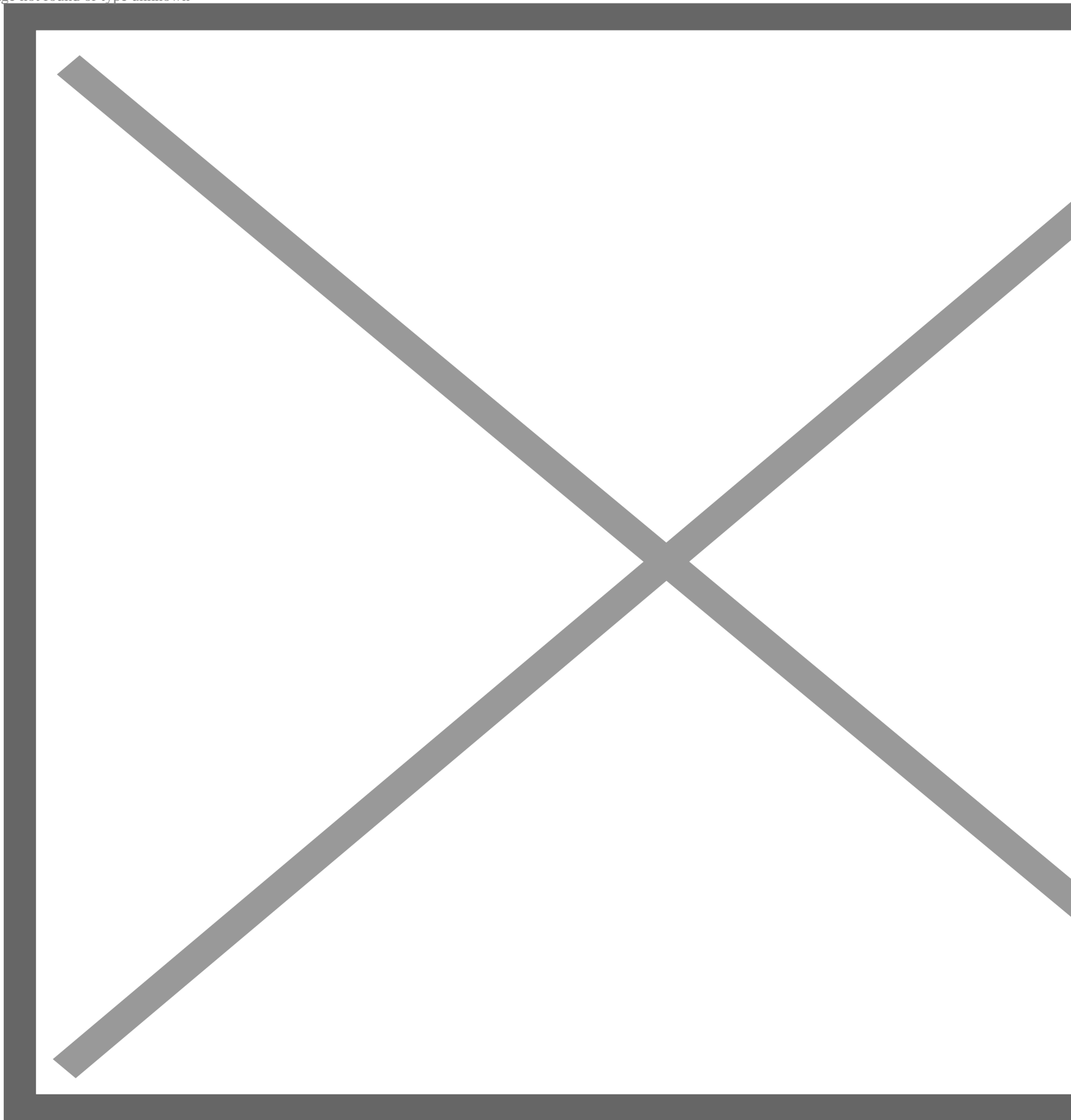
RUSSIA: The Russian Aerospace Forces are still using 47-year-old missiles during its wild-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The Kh-31 is a Russian air-to-surface missile carried by aircraft such as the Su-35 and Su-34. The air-launched anti-radiation configuration of this missile is called the Kh-31P.

The missile is conventionally shaped, with cruciform wings and control surfaces made from titanium. The two-stage propulsion is notable. On launch, a solid-fuel booster in the tail accelerates the missile to Mach 1.8 and the motor is discarded. Then four air intakes open up and as in the Franco-German ANS/ANF the empty rocket case becomes the combustion chamber of a kerosene-fuelled ramjet, which takes it beyond Mach 4.

A recent video clip from the Russian military showed its newest Su-35 fighter jet, with two ageing Kh-31P air-to-surface missiles, that participate in “military operation” on Ukraine.

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In addition, a Russian Su-34 attack aircraft with a similar missile was previously spotted in Belarus, and wreckages of the KH-31P were found in Ukraine.

Some missiles of this type, which were designed used to destroy hostile radars, also were found in Kyiv.

[#Ukraine](#), [#Kyiv](#): What appears to be the remains of a Russian-made Kh-31 air-to-surface missile that landed in the Holosiyiv district.

The precise variant is unclear, but it is likely given the location to be a Kh-31P anti-radiation missile.

? Iryna Kyporenko pic.twitter.com/AkhMjhK0B2

— ?? Ukraine Weapons Tracker (@UAWeapons) [February 24, 2022](#)

Over the past 10 years, the Russian military industry has been determined to find a replacement for the ageing Kh-31 missiles, and plans have been voiced up to the adoption of a hypersonic strike missile in place of the Soviet ones. But in reality, all plans remained on paper and the war with Ukraine, Russian military aviation entered with missiles of the past generation, which cannot fulfill their tasks.

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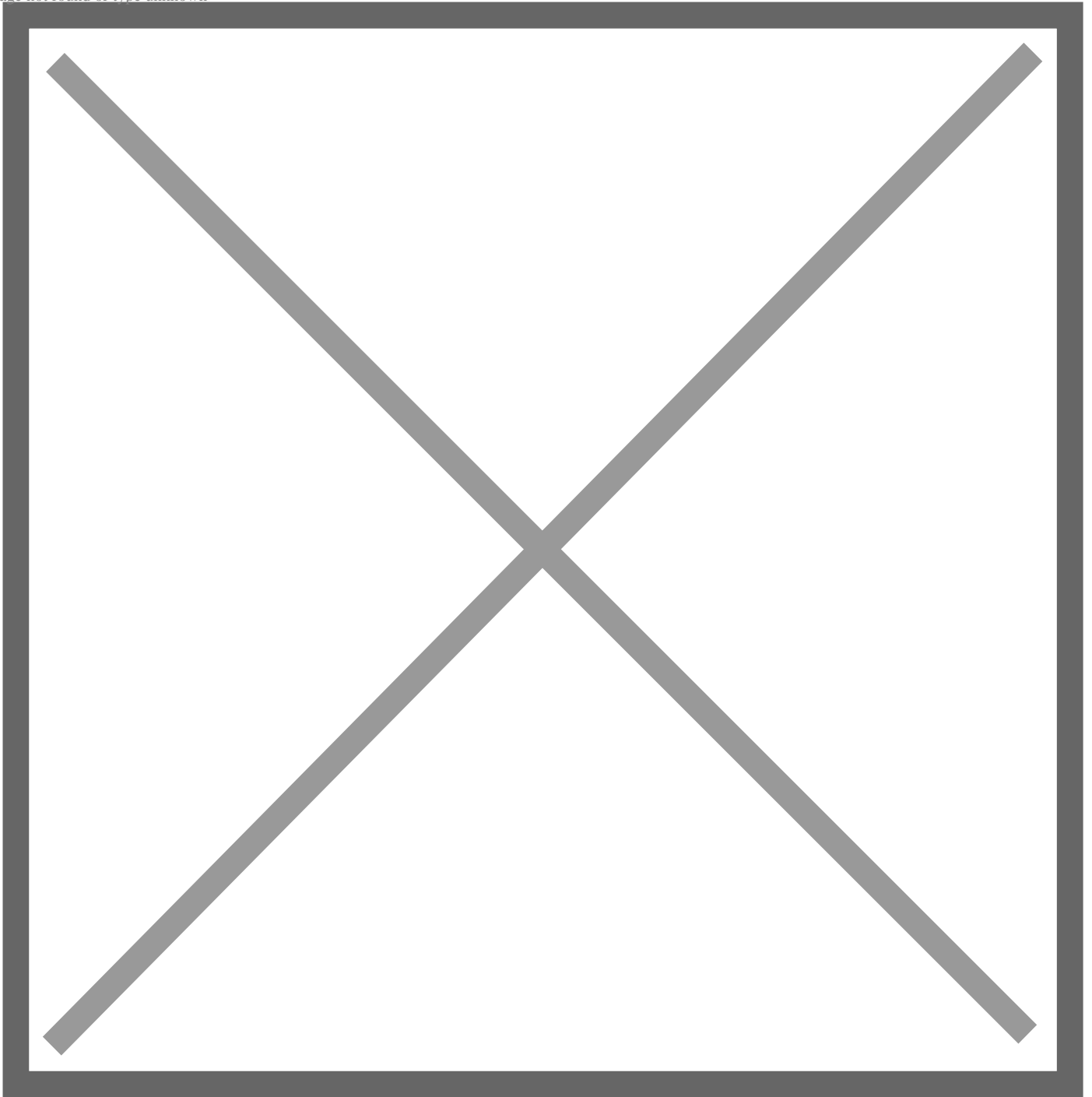


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Most missiles just broke apart on landing after running out of energy or were shot down by Ukrainian Air defense Systems.

There's a Ukrainian military claim here about shooting down a Kh-31. It may be more likely that it did not find an active Ukrainian radar or failed to do so, so just broke apart on landing after running out of energy. <https://t.co/qv7PrjWUo>

— Steve Trimble (@TheDEWLine) [March 17, 2022](#)

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By Dylan Malyasov

Category

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