



Russian Military Given Formal Order To Target Ukraine's Long-Range Weapons From US

Description

RUSSIA: Russia's defense ministry has issued **a formal order for Russian troops to target Ukraine's long-range weapons and artillery supplied by the West**, specifically the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) provided by the United States.

In Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu publishing the order on Monday, the Kremlin is sending one of the most provocative messages to Washington thus far in the war, signaling the two powers continue stumbling toward direct confrontation.

"Army General Sergey Shoigu... **instructed the commander to use surgical strikes and crush the enemy's long-range missile and artillery means,**" the Russian Defense Ministry said [according](#) to TASS.



Via Russian Defense Ministry

HIMARS have allowed Ukrainian forces to target far beyond the Russian front lines, against things like command centers or supply lines, for the first time after five months of war. At this point an estimated at least eight of the systems are in Ukrainian hands with a total dozen expected within weeks.

Kiev officials have called the rockets, which have a reach of about 50 miles, a “game-changer” – but have still pressured the US to send longer-range versions. The Pentagon is capable of outfitting the HIMARS to reach longer ranges, but the administration has been reluctant on fears it could unnecessarily provoke Russia into wider escalation.

Russian military leaders, while themselves claiming to have taken out at least one of the systems in recent days, have charged that Ukraine has used its long-range weapons to attack residential areas of Donbas:

Last week, an advisor to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that Ukrainian forces had [used HIMARS to launch 30 strikes against Russian targets](#). Ukraine said the HIMARS were used to destroy two ammunition depots deep inside Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine, while Russia said the strikes hit civilian infrastructure.

*The Russian Defense Ministry said that Ukraine has used long-range weapons “**to shell the residential areas of Donbas and continue the intentional incineration of wheat fields and grain storage facilities.**” As Ukraine has been using the Western-provided arms, Russia has stepped up missile attacks across Ukraine.*

Also likely behind the Kremlin’s rationale for stepping up targeting against the HIMARS and other long-range munitions is the potential for missiles reaching deeper into Russian territory. On Saturday, for example, a Ukrainian intelligence official openly declared the military should begin **striking at Russian facilities inside Crimea**, going so far as naming the HIMARS as capable of that.

Ukraine's commander-in-chief Valery Zaluzhny says HIMARS missile systems have helped to stabilise the frontline. <https://t.co/acuDoiqcll>

— Leonid ?? Ragozin (@leonidragozin) [July 19, 2022](#)

As we detailed previously, in return the deputy chair of Russia's security council and former president Dmitry Medvedev warned the following day that any attacks on Crimea **would mean "doomsday" for Ukrainian leadership.**

"Should anything of the kind happen, they will be faced with a doomsday, very quick and tough, immediately. There will be no avoiding it. But they keep on provoking the general situation by such statements," Medvedev [said](#).

by Tyler Durden

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