Shelling of Kievskiy District, Donetsk, using Grad MLRS on April 28, 2023

PUBLIC INVESTIGATION

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ABBREVIATIONS

UAF - Ukrainian Armed Forces

DPR - Donetsk People's Republic

LPR - Luhansk People's Republic

SMIBr - Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade

MLRS - Multiple Launch Rocket System

RF - the Russian Federation

SMO - Special Military Operation

JCCC - Joint Centre for Control and Coordination

OC - operational capabilities

UAF - Ukrainian Armed Formations

PREAMBLE

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched a military operation in Ukraine. Vladimir Putin called its goal "to protect people who have been subjected to genocide by the Kyiv regime for eight years"¹. According to the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, as of July 3, through the efforts of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, the LPR and the DPR, the entire territory of the LPR was liberated, which was one of the primary tasks of the SMO². However, as of March 14, 2023, more than 40% of the territory of the DPR was still controlled by the Ukrainian security forces³.

In the area of the Donetsk front, offensive operations were constantly carried out on the positions of the Ukrainian armed formations. In response to them, the UAF shelled the territory controlled by the allied forces, striking at crowded places, civilian infrastructure facilities, transport and trade hubs.

Since the beginning of 2023, the UAF have continued to strike almost daily on the capital of the Donetsk People's Republic, including its central regions, using various weapons. One of the most massive shelling in terms of damage was carried out from the Grad MLRS.

Thus, on January 10, 2023, UAF fired rockets at the Leninskiy and Kuibyshevskiy districts of Donetsk⁴, which resulted in a civilian's injury, damage to school No. 66 in Donetsk and private residential buildings; moreover, ten transformer substations were de-energized.

On February 4, 2023, the Kievsky district of Donetsk came under fire from the UAF⁵, as a result of which three civilians were killed, another was injured, multi-

¹Message of the President of the Russian Federation (published on 24.02.2022) Official website of the President of the Russian Federation URL: http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843/videos (accessed on 06.07.2022)

²Russia claims key city in punishing conquest of eastern Ukraine (published on 03.07.2022) The Washington Post URL: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/07/03/lysychansk-luhansk-russia-ukraine-war/ (accessed on 06.07.2022)

³The 384th day of hostilities (published on 14.03.2023) Vazhnyi % percent" Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/VazhnyProcent/172 (accessed on 10.07.2023)

⁴Records of the shelling effects in the Kuibyshevskiy district of Donetsk on January 10, 2023 (published on 11.01.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/13421 (accessed on 28.02.2023)

⁵Records of the shelling effects in the Voroshilovskiy district of Donetsk on February 4, 2023 (published on 4.02.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/13734 (accessed on 28.02.2023)

apartment residential buildings, Donetsk kindergarten No. 197, a gas station and a dental clinic were damaged.

On April 7, 2023, as a result of artillery shelling of the Voroshilovskiy district of Donetsk, a civilian was killed, another 16 people got injuries of varying severity, multi-apartment residential buildings, shopping pavilions of the Central market, a cafe, and a shopping center were damaged⁶.

As of the morning of April 28, 2023, on the Donetsk front, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, with the support of artillery, were conducting assault operations in the city of Maryinka, in the direction of Pervomaisky, Severny (a settlement north of Vodyanoye) and on the south-western approaches to Avdeyevka. In addition, the positions of Ukrainian armed formations in the vicinity of Novomikhailovka, Paraskovyivka, Georgievka, the town of Krasnogorovka, Nevelsky, Karlovka, Lastochkin, Berdychi, Novokalinov, New York, Southern and Northern (a settlement north-west of Horlivka) were shelled. In response to this, the UAF attacked Donetsk⁷.

On April 28, 2023 at 13:10⁸ and 13:11⁹ Moscow time, UAF subjected of the Kievskiy district of Donetsk to massive shelling, as a result of which 9 civilians (6 women and 2 men) were killed, including a child - a girl aged 8 years. Sixteen people received injuries of varying severity: men born in 1966, 1987, 1984, 1991, 1983, 1974, 1998 and 1965; women born in 1982, 1958, 1974, 1983, 1958, 1997, 1982 and 1978.

According to the summary of the DPR representative office in the JCCC¹⁰, damage was recorded at 26 addresses in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk, **including as a result of direct hits of rocket projectiles**:

⁶Records of the shelling effects in the Voroshilovskiy district of Donetsk on April 07, 2023 (published on 07.04.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/14519 (accessed on 10.07.2023)

⁷ Front-line summary for the morning of 28.04.2023 (published on 28.04.2023) "WarGonzo" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/wargonzo/12194 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

⁸Shelling was recorded from the UAF side in the direction (published on 28.04.2023) "Online DPR JCCC" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/online_dnr_sckk/22930 (accessed on 10.07.2023)

⁹Shelling was recorded from the UAF side in the direction (published on 28.04.2023) "Online DPR JCCC" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/online_dnr_sckk/229313 (accessed on 10.07.2023)

¹⁰Records of the shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk on April 28, 2023 (published on 28.04.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/14830 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

- The Republican Traumatological Center in Artyoma St.;

- "Green Construction of the Kievskiy district of Donetsk" Municipal Enterprise in Patrioticheskaya St.;

Institute of Economic Research in Universitetskaya St.;

- an administrative building in Universitetskaya St.;

- a trading mall in Universitetskaya St.

- "Pizza" cafe in Universitetskaya St.

- MUE AGD "Donelektroavtotrans" TTU in Shchorsa St.;

- infrastructure of the "Olimpiyskiy" Republican Sports Complex in Chelyuskintsev Street;

- 10A, Titova Ave. – a multi-apartment residential building;

- 149, Artyoma St., - a direct shell hit in a multi-apartment residential building;

- 102, 104, 104A, and 147A/G, Artyoma St., - multi-apartment residential buildings.

- 70, 74, 76, and 80, Universitetskaya St., - multi-apartment residential buildings.

- 65, Shchorsa St. - a multi-apartment residential building

- 10, Donbass Liberation Ave. - a multi-apartment residential building;

- 33, Patrioticheskaya Str. - a private residential building, the building was destroyed;

- 30, Patrioticheskaya Str. - a private residential building;

- 32, Kotsyubinskiy St. - a private residential building, the building was destroyed;

- the territory of the Forged Figures Park in Universitetskaya Str.

- fire outbreak in motor vehicles and a bus was recorded in Universitetskaya Str.

This investigation will examine in detail the shelling of the Kievskiy district of Donetsk, carried out on April 28, 2023.

INCIDENT LOCATION

After examining the incident location in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk, talking with witnesses of the shelling, and studying photo and video materials published in the media and on the Internet, we managed to identify **25** traces of the detonation of artillery ammunition. All of them have been explored and mapped using the Yandex Maps service (see Fig1).

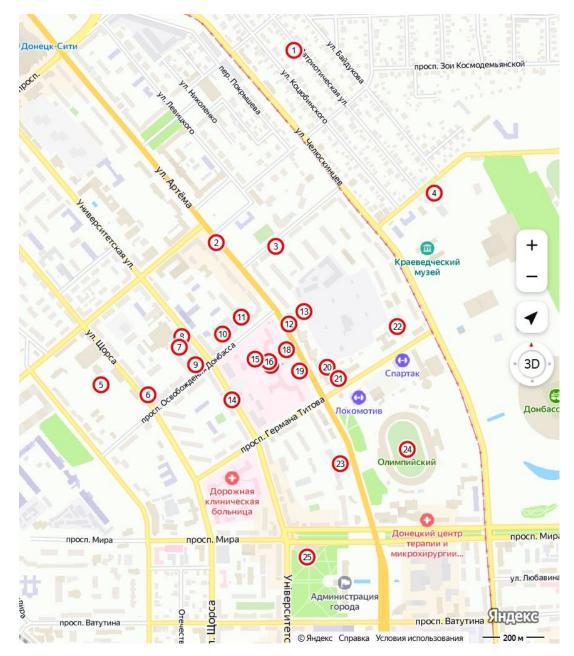


Fig1 – *The scheme of shelling of the Kievskiy district of Donetsk, which happened on April 28, 2023.*

Shell hit 1 was recorded in the residential sector of the Gladkovka residential area in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk at 33, Patrioticheskaya Str. (see Fig. 2). The projectile hit the roof of a residential building, causing a fire. The fire spread throughout the territory of the residential sector, as a result of which the house at 34, Kotsiubinskogo St. was also damaged.



Fig. 2 – Consequences of projectile hitting in a residential sector at 33, Patrioticheskaya Str.

Shell hit 2 The projectile hit the curbstone in Artyoma St. about 20 meters south-east from the public transport stop "Panfilov Ave" (see Fig. 3). As a result of the projectile detonation, asphalt pavement and landscaped areas got minor damage.



*Fig. 3 – Shell hit in the curbstone in Artyoma Str*¹¹.

¹¹ Artyoma Street, another one incoming shelling closer to Panfilov Ave. (published on 28.04.2023) Astrakhan Military Correspondent Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/astrahandm/8303 (accessed on 05.07.2023)

Shell hit 3 A rocket projectile hit the base of the north side of the multiapartment residential building at 10, Donbass Liberation Avenue, about 10 meters from the north-west corner (see Fig. 4). At the site of the shell hit, a deformed projectile rocket engine was found in the crater along with a stabilizer unit, presumably used for firing from the Grad MLRS.



Fig. 4 – Shell hit in the multi-apartment residential building at 10, Donbass Liberation Str^{12} .

Shell hit 4 A rocket projectile detonated in the wall of the building of the "Green Construction of the Kievskiy District" municipal enterprise in Donetsk in its

¹² Shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk - at 10, Donbass Liberation Ave. (published on 28.04.2023) "Donbass AGS_Z" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/Ags_Donbass/166319 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

north-western part between the first and second floors, subsequently creating a hole in it (see Fig. 5). In addition, as a result of the projectile detonation, a municipal vehicle located approximately five meters to the north-west of the shell hit site was damaged.



Fig. 5 – *Shell hit in the building of the "Green Construction of the Kievskiy District" municipal enterprise at 102, Patrioticheskaya St.*¹³

Shell hit 5 was in the territory of the trolleybus depot No. 1 of the Municipal Unitary Enterprise of the Administration of the City of Donetsk "Donelektroavtotrans" at 76A, Shchorsa St. As a result of the projectile detonation, a cavity was formed in the asphalt pavement with a diameter of about one and a half meters (see Fig. 6).

¹³ As a result of shelling by Ukrainian fascists, the building of the "Green Construction of the Kievskiy District" Municipal Enterprise was damaged (published on 28.04.2023) Aleksey KulemZin Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/kulemzin_donetsk/16198 (accessed on 04.07.2023)



Fig. 6 – Shell hit in the territory of the trolleybus depot No. 1 of the Municipal Unitary Enterprise of the Administration of the City of Donetsk "Donelektroavtotrans" at 76A, Shchorsa St.¹⁴

¹⁴Records of the shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk on April 28, 2023 (published on 28.04.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/14806 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

Shell hit 6 The projectile exploded in an asphalt pavement a few meters south of the south corner of a multi-apartment residential building at 65, Shchorsa St. (see Fig. 7). As a result of the projectile detonation, fragments cut through the façade of the southern side of the multi-apartment residential building at 65, Shchorsa St., and the northern side of the multi-apartment building at 63, Shchorsa St.



Fig. 7 – *Shell hit in an asphalt pavement next to the multi-apartment residential building at 65, Shchorsa St.*¹⁵

Shell hit 7 In this case, the projectile detonated in the paving slabs approximately 12 meters south-west of the south corner of the residential building at 80E, Universitetskaya St., where a pizzeria "Pinocchio" and a game computer showroom "Take Cyber" were located. As a result of the explosion, fragments slashed a civilian vehicle, but a civilian inside the car was not injured. The façade and glazing of the northern side of the residential building at 80, Universitetskaya St. were also damaged.

¹⁵ A rocket in the courtyard of the residential building at 65, Shchors Str. the entire center of Donetsk was littered with such deadly "gifts" from the Armed Forces of Ukraine today (published on 20.12.2022) "Donbass decides" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/donbassr/37929 (accessed on 06.07.2023)



Fig. 8 – Shell hit in the paving slabs next to the residential building at 80E, Universitetskaya St.

Shell hit 8 Another rocket projectile hit a civilian vehicle parked about 10 meters north-west of the north corner of the residential building at 80E, Universitetskaya St. A direct hit on a civilian vehicle started a fire that was spread to two cars parked nearby (see Fig. 9). As a result, two cars were completely burned down, and another one received significant damage. Damage was recorded to the façades and glazing of the eastern side of the residential building at 80A, Universitetskaya St., at the south-west side of the Institute for Economic Research at 77, Universitetskaya St., the *Pinocchio* pizzeria and the *Take Cyber* game computer showroom located in the residential building at 80E, Universitetskaya St., where at that moment there were visitors. Thus, two civilians were injured near a pizzeria and the Institute of Economic Research.

At the site of the shell hit, a deformed burnt fragment of the projectile rocket engine was found in a burned-out car (see Fig. 10).



Fig. 9 – *Shell hit in the civilian vehicle next to the residential building at 80E, Universitetskaya St.*¹⁶



Fig. 10 - A deformed burnt fragment of the projectile rocket engine found in a burned-out car¹⁷.

¹⁶ Consequences of shelling in the vicinity of the former supermarket "Ukraine" (published on 28.04.2023) "Military Donetsk | Summary Reports | SMO" Telegram-Channel URL: https://t.me/militarydonetsk/77753 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

¹⁷ Consequences of incoming shelling nearby the supermarket "Ukraine" in the central part of the city of Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) "Reporter Rudenko" Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/RtrDonetsk/17096 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

Shell hit 9 The projectile hit the inner façade of the residential building at 78, Universitetskaya St., in its southern part at the level of the interfloor slab between the third and fourth floors (see Fig. 11). This building houses public utilities office of Donetskzhilstroy No. 1, shops and pharmacies. As a result of the projectile detonation, the glazing and cladding of the inner façade of the building were damaged.



Fig. 11 – Shell hit in the building at 78, Universitetskaya St.

Shell hit 10 The projectile hit the two-story building of the Donetsk Prosthetic and Orthopedic Center at 11A, Donbass Liberation Ave., located in its western part (see Fig. 12). As a result of a direct hit on the building, two roof slabs, floor slabs of the second floor were pierced, and windows were also damaged. In the seven-story building, located a few meters north of the shell hit site, windows from the third to the seventh floors were damaged.



Fig. 12 – Shell hit on the roof of the two-story building of the Donetsk Prosthetic and Orthopedic Center¹⁸.

Shell hit 11 was on the roof of the fourth entrance of a multi-apartment residential building at 108A, Artyoma St. – a few meters from the south-west corner of the residential building (see Fig. 13). As a result of the detonation, window blocks and glazing were damaged in the entrance. In addition, fragments and debris of a projectile, presumably intended for firing from MLRS, were found at the incident location.

¹⁸ A brigade from St. Petersburg came under UAF military fire at Liberation of Donbass Avenue published on 28.04.2023) VKontakte Social Network URL: https://vk.com/wall-213217306_5286 (accessed on 11.07.2023)



Fig. 13 – Shell hit on the multi-apartment residential building at 108A, Artyoma St.¹⁹

Shell hit 12 The projectile exploded in a paving slab a few meters south of the western side of a multi-apartment residential building at 147G, Artyoma St. (see Fig. 14). The projectile crater looks like a round cavity nearly 7-10 cm deep with fragmentation grooves diverging to the north-west. As a result of the projectile explosion, the western façade and the glazing of buildings at 147G, and 147V, Artyoma St. were damaged.

¹⁹ Shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) "Donbass AGS_Z" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/Ags_Donbass/166360 (accessed on 05.07.2023)



Fig. 14 – *Shell hit on the paving slab next to the building at 147G, Artyoma St.*

Shell hit 13 In this case, the projectile detonated about 15 meters east of the eastern side of the multi-apartment residential building at 147G, Artyoma St., hitting the ground in the territory of the children's playground (see Fig. 15). The place of projectile detonation looks like a round cavity of about 15 cm deep, with a diameter of about 1 m.



Fig. 15 – Shell hit on the territory of the children's playground²⁰.

²⁰ Residential buildings destroyed by the UAF shelling in Artyoma Street in the very center of Donetsk (published on 20.12.2022) "Donbass decides" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/donbassr/37892 (accessed on 06.07.2023)

Shell hit 14. The projectile exploded in the roadbed next to the dedicated lane for public transport in Universitetskaya St. The site of the shell hit is located approximately 10 m to the east of the eastern facade of a multi-apartment residential building at 74, Universitetskaya St. (see Fig. 16). Shuttle bus No. 25 was driving along this section of the road in close proximity to the shell hit site; the bus ignited and completely burned down in the middle of the road at the time of the projectile detonation. There were a driver and seven passengers in the public transport cabin, including an eight-year-old girl (see Fig. 17). All passengers died on the spot; the driver was slightly injured. In addition, the glazing and the eastern facade of the multi-apartment residential buildings were damaged at 70, 74, and 76, Universitetskaya St.



Fig. 16 – Shell hit on the roadway in Universitetskaya St^{21} .

²¹Locals say the Nazis fired on a nearby hospital (published on 28.04.2023) Gorshenin works! Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/vgor999/6193 (accessed on 04.07.2023)



Fig. 17 – Passengers who died inside shuttle bus No. 25, which burned down due to a shell explosion in Universitetskaya St.

Shell hit 15 With a direct hit the projectile pierced the roof of the main building of the Republican Traumatological Center at 106, Artyoma St. (see Fig. 18). As a result of the shell hit, the hand microsurgery department was damaged. Fragments of a projectile remained at the incident location – a missile part and a stabilizer unit, presumably used for firing from MLRS (see Fig. 19).



Fig. 18 – *Shell hit on the roof of the Republican Traumatological Center*²².

²² Another shelling of Donetsk center from MLRS today (published on 14.03.2022) "The DPR People's Militia" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/nm_dnr/10274 (accessed on 04.07.2032)



Fig. 19 – Consequences of the shell hit that damaged the main building of the Republican Traumatological Center²³.

Shell hit 16 This shell hit is a camouflet (an underground explosion of a mine to destroy enemy underground structures, and an explosion of an artillery projectile (bombs, mines) underground without throwing out earth and fragments - *from the explanatory dictionary of S.I. Ozhegov*²⁴). The projectile landed approximately 40m south-east of shell hit 15 and deepened into the ground (see Fig. 20).

²³ The projectile pierced the roof of the hand microsurgery department in the Republican Traumatological Center in Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) Donetsk News Agency URL: https://dan-news.ru/foto/snarjad-probil-kryshu-otdelenija-mikrohirurgii-kisti-respublikanskogo-travmcentra/ (accessed on 06.07.2023)

²⁴KAMUFLET Ozhegov's explanatory dictionary online. URL: https://slovarozhegova.ru/word.php?wordid=10563 (accessed on 06.07.2023)

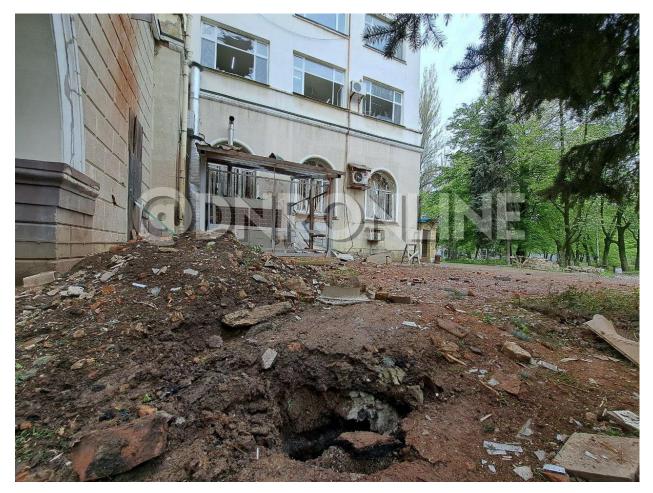


Fig. 20 – A camouflet in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center²⁵

Shell hit 17 The projectile hit the basement floor, breaking through the wall of the room in which the magnetic resonance imaging scanner was located (see Fig. 21) – 10 m to the south of the camouflet. As a result of the shell hit, the device received minor damage, and the chiller – cooling equipment, which was installed outside the hospital, was significantly damaged. One floor above, the office of the deputy director for the surgical part of the administrative and managerial apparatus was also partially damaged.

In this room, a deformed hollow metal object of a cylindrical shape was found, which is identified as part of a rocket propulsion unit, presumably of a MLRS projectile.

²⁵ As a result of massive shelling of the center of Donetsk, 9 civilians were killed (published on 28.04.2023) "DPR Online Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/dnronline/96725 (accessed on 06.07.2023)



Fig. 21 – The consequences of a shell hit in the room where the magnetic resonance tomography scanner was located²⁶.

Shell hit 18 Another projectile hit a tree in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center, 50 m to the west of the south-western corner of the building at 147V, Artyoma St. (see Fig. 22). The projectile exploded in the crown of a tree. To the north-west of the explosion site, a band of the main fragmentation was formed. In turn, this allows us to state that this projectile was fired from the north-west to the south-east.



Fig. 22 – *Shell hit on the crown of a tree in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center.*

²⁶ Consequences of the shelling of the Republican Traumatological Center in Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) "Reporter Rudenko V" Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/RtrDonetsk/17103 (accessed on 04.07.2032)

Shell hit 19 The fifth shell hit on the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center was 50 meters to the north-east from the admissions department. In this case, the projectile detonated in the soil (see Fig. 23).

In total, as a result of shells hitting the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center, the glazing of about 50 windows was damaged in the hospital, the facade of the building was cut by fragments, and the roof and interior walls of the building were also damaged. One medical officer was injured.



Fig. 23 – *Shell hit on the ground in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center.*

Shell hit 20 This shell hit was a camouflet. The projectile landed about 7 meters north of the northern facade of the multi-apartment residential building at 147A, Artyoma St. The projectile deepened into the soil, significantly damaging only the asphalt pavement above the projectile explosion site (see Fig. 24).

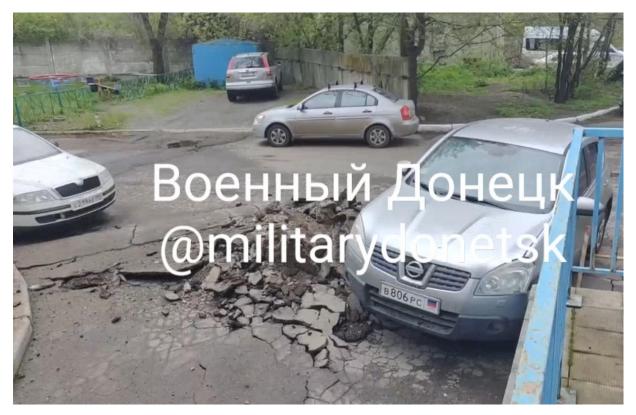


Fig. 24 - A camouflet nearby the multi-apartment residential building at 147A, Artyoma St^{27} .

Shell hit 21 The projectile hit the western facade of the building, in close proximity to its south-western corner, at the level of the ninth floor at 8B, Titova Avenue. As a result of the shell explosion, the glazing, the wall and one of the interior premises were damaged (see Fig. 25).



Fig. 25 – *Shell hit on the building at 8B, Titova Avenue, (left photo: outside view, right photo²⁸: inside view).*

²⁷ Kievskiy district. Effects of Shelling at 147A Artyoma St. (published on 28.04.2023) "Military □ Donetsk | Summary Reports | SMO" Telegram-Channel URL: https://t.me/militarydonetsk/77757 (accessed on 06.07.2032)

²⁸ Another photo from subscribers with the consequences of shelling (published on 23.08.2022) Code red-Donetsk Z Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/chp_donetsk_z/49883 (accessed on: 06.07.2032)

Shell hit 22 The projectile hit the south-western side of a multi-apartment residential building at 8A, Titova Avenue between the first and second floors with apartments (see Fig. 26). As a result of the shell hit, the balconies and the wall of one of the apartment premises were damaged.

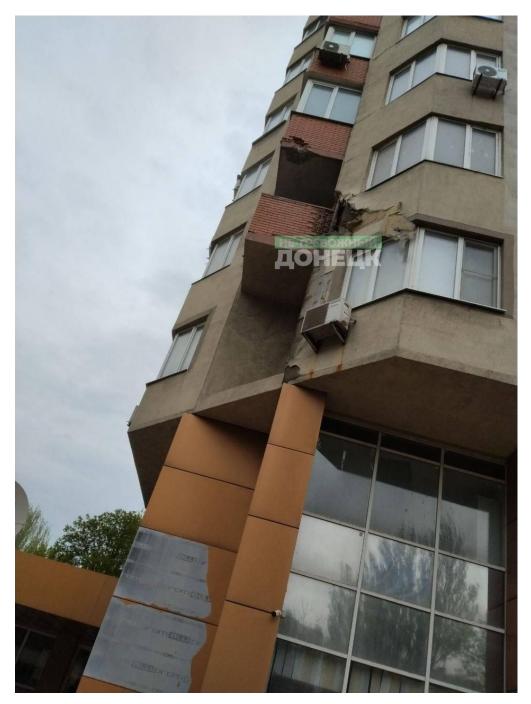


Fig. 26 – *Shell hit in the multi-apartment residential building at 10A, Titova Avenue*²⁹.

²⁹ Hitting of a Ukrainian shell on the residential building at 10A, Titova Avenue (published on 23.08.2022) Code red-Donetsk Z Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/chp_donetsk_z/49887 (accessed on: 06.07.2032)

Shell hit 23 The projectile hit a few meters east of the eastern facade of a multi-apartment residential building at 102, Artyoma St. Upon landing, the projectile detonated in the crown of the tree, and the remnants flew by inertia further and hit the paving slabs under the bench (see Fig. 27). As a result of the projectile detonation, the glazing and facade of the eastern side of the residential building at 102, Artyoma St., and a civilian vehicle were damaged. A female civilian who was walking along the alley at the time of the explosion got fragmentation wounds.



Fig. 27 – Shell hit next to the multi-apartment residential building at 102, Artyoma St.

Shell hit 24 Another projectile detonated in the middle of the field of the Republican Sports Complex "Olimpiyskiy" at 198V Chelyuskintsev Str. (see Fig. 28).



Fig. 28 – Shell hit on the field of the Republican Sports Complex "Olimpiyskiy"³⁰.

Shell hit 25 was located in the north-western part of the Forged Figures Park, about 70 m south-east of the intersection of Universitetskaya Street and Mira Avenue (see Fig. 29). As a result of the projectile detonation, a cavity was formed in the ground with a diameter of about one and a half meters.



Fig. 29 – Shell hit on the territory of the Forged Figures $Park^{31}$.

³⁰ Donetsk, incoming shelling at the field of the RSC "Olimpiyskiy" (published on 28.04.2023) War through the Journalist's Eyes" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/WarInMyEyes/3245 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

³¹ Incoming shelling in the Forged Figures Park, Voroshilovskiy District, Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) War through the Journalist's Eyes'' Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/WarInMyEyes/3254 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

WEAPON TYPE

Projectile debris

At the site of shell hit 3 at the base of a multi-apartment residential building at 10, Donbass Liberation Avenue, a deformed projectile rocket engine and a stabilizer block with one central and five nozzle holes for the outflow of gases from the reactive chamber were found, two more nozzle holes were damaged. They are typical for the 122-mm Grad MLRS projectile (see Fig. 30).



Fig. 30 – Debris of a rocket projectile in the basement of the multi-apartment residential building at 10, Donbass Liberation Ave³².

At the site of the shell hit 8, a deformed burnt fragment of the projectile rocket engine was found in a burned-out car. Using a gauge tape, we measured the projectile fragment diameter – it equals approximately 12.7 cm (see Fig. 31). Thus, the caliber of the projectile is 122 mm.

³² Shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk - at 10, Donbass Liberation Ave. (published on 28.04.2023) "Donbass AGS_Z" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/Ags_Donbass/166319 (accessed on 04.07.2023)



Fig. 31 – Measuring the diameter of a projectile that hit one of the cars.

At the site of shell hit 14, a deformed hollow cylindrical metal object was found, it was identified as part of a rocket engine, presumably from a MLRS projectile (see Fig. 32), and a fragment of a mesh of semi-finished fragments in the form of truncated rhombic pyramids on the inner surface (see Fig. 33). Such semi-finished submunitions are designed to provide an increase in the fragmentation effect after the detonation of the explosive and are typical for ammunition used for launching from MLRS³³.

Noteworthy, similar diamond-shaped submunitions were found at the site of shell hit 24 (see Fig. 34).

³³ Rocket artillery ammunition (published on 03.06.2014) Missilery website. URL: https://missilery.info/article/ram (accessed on 24.07.2023)



Fig. 32 – Remains of a MLRS projectile missile part in Universitetskaya St.



Fig. 33 - A fragment of a mesh of semi-finished submunitions³⁴.

³⁴ 28.04.23 74, Universitetskaya St., a bus under fire, 7 persons killed (published on 28.04.2023) "Elephant (in Donetsk)" Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/slondonetsk/66 (accessed on 06.07.2023)



Fig. 34 – Diamond-shaped fragments at the site of shell hit on RSC "Olimpiyskiy"³⁵.

At the site of shell hit 15, a deformed cylindrical missile part was found along with a 122 mm projectile stabilizer unit (see Fig. 35). In addition, the stabilizer unit has holes of a specific shape, located at the place where the fin is attached to the body, which is typical for Grad MLRS projectiles. To confirm this argument, we attach a layout of the stabilizer unit for the Grad MLRS projectile having a caliber of 122 mm, which shows holes of identical shapes in the cross-section (see. Fig. 36)³⁵

³⁵ Casualties and destruction: what is known about the shelling of Donetsk by Ukrainian Armed Forces on 28-04-2023 (published on 28.04.2023) REN TV website URL: https://ren.tv/video/embed/1099207 (accessed on 11.07.2023)



Fig. 35 – The rocket projectile that damaged the main building of the Republican Traumatological Center³⁶.

³⁶ Consequences of the shelling of Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) RIA News Mediabank website. URL: https://riamediabank.ru/media/8421507.html?context=list&list_sid=list_303051628&sort=date (accessed on 05.07.2023)

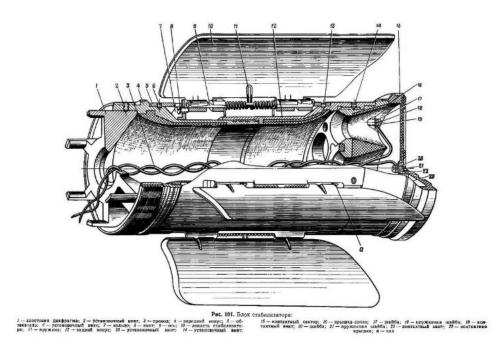


Fig. 36 – *The drawing of the 9K51 Grad MLRS projectile stabilizer unit from the book BM-21 GRAD*³⁷.

An MRV-U fuse was found near the site of shell hit 16 in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center after the shelling (see Fig. 37). This type of fuse indexed 9E244 is used for the M-21OF missile projectile indexed 9M22U, 9M22U-1 and 9M22 as part of the Grad MLRS³⁸.



Fig. 37 – The fuse of the Grad MLRS shell, found near the shell hit site in the territory of the Republican Traumatological Center³⁹.

³⁷ Gun in Russia – BM-21 GRAD. Russian motor books 2002. 37 p.

³⁸M-21 field rocket system. Missilery website. URL: https://missilery.info/missile/grad (accessed on 24.07.2023)

³⁹ Consequences of the shelling of the Republican Traumatological Center in Donetsk (published on 28.04.2023) "Reporter Rudenko V" Telegram-channel. URL: https://t.me/RtrDonetsk/17103 (accessed on 04.07.2023)

After the shelling at the site of shell hit 17, a hollow fragment of the cylindrical projectile was salvaged from under the rubble; we identified this fragment as a missile part of the MLRS projectile (see Fig. 38).



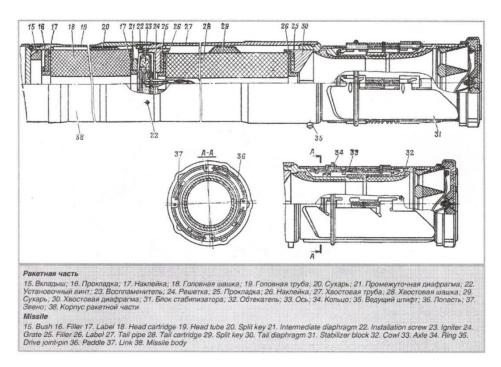
Fig. 38 – A fragment of a projectile found in a room with a magnetic resonance tomography scanner.

Proceeding from the above, we can state that the projectile fragments that we studied correspond to the original Soviet M-21OF Grad MLRS shell indexed 9M22. It should be noted that, according to the DPR representative office in the JCCC⁴⁰, during the shelling of the Kievskiy district, the Ukrainian military also used 122-mm JROF-HEAP high-explosive fragmentation rockets for MLRS, produced in Slovakia (the firing range of high-explosive fragmentation shells is from 1.6 km to 20 km).

M-21OF Projectile

Since the original Soviet M-21OF projectile for the Grad MLRS serves as the basis of the shells under consideration, we will consider its performance characteristics (see Fig. 39, Fig. 40).

⁴⁰ Records of the shelling effects in the Kievskiy district of Donetsk on April 28, 2023 (published on 28.04.2023) The DNR in JCCC: facts of Ukraine's war crimes Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/DNR_SCKK/14830 (accessed on 04.07.2023)



*Fig. 39 - M-21OF projectile design (a high explosive fragmentation projectile, used for firing from Grad MLRS)*⁴¹.

Калибр, мм	122
Длина снаряда со взрывателем, мм	2870
Тип головной части	осколочно-фугасная
Вес , кг: - окончательно снаряженного снаряда - снаряда в укупорке - головной части - взрывчатого вещества в головной части - порохового заряда	66 100 18.4 6.4 20.45
Наибольшая скорость снаряда при нормальных условиях, м/с	690
Дальность стрельбы, м : - максимальная - с большим тормозным кольцом - с малым тормозным кольцом	20400 до 12000 от 12000 до 16000
Температурный диапазон применения снаряда, °С	-40 - +50
Габаритные размеры укупорки, мм	2810x290x254

Fig. 40 - Technical characteristics of the unguided M-210F rocket projectile⁴².

In the front part of the 122-mm M-21OF, a warhead is located behind the head contact fuse; steel housing of the propulsion unit adjoins to this warhead. Due to the large elongation, the housing consists of two cylindrical sections connected by a thread. The nozzle unit includes a central and six peripheral nozzles. In the supersonic part, the nozzles have the shape of a cone with an angle of 30°. The diameter of the critical section of the nozzle is 19 mm, the cut is 37 mm.

⁴¹ Gun in Russia – BM-21 GRAD. Russian motor books 2002. 37 p.

⁴² Mechanized combat vehicle BM-21. Technical description. Book 1. Moscow: Voenizdat, 1971. Pp. 7, 8, 91; Mechanized combat vehicle BM-21. Technical description and operating instructions manual. 3rd edn., stereotyped. Moscow: Armament. Politics. Conversion, 2002. Pp. 5-6.

A 0.3 mm thick heat-shielding coating applied to the inner surface of the propulsion unit body not only protects the steel housing from heating and a corresponding decrease in strength, but also significantly reduces the energy loss of the burning fuel and contributes to obtaining a high specific impulse and an increased burning rate. The charge of solid fuel for technological reasons is also made of two semi-charges. In this case, the tail semi-charge has a larger gap between the housing walls and the fuel, since it is necessary to provide a sufficient flow area for the fuel combustion products of the front and tail semi-charges.

Due to the fact that during long-term storage of projectiles in a horizontal position, deformation of the propulsion unit case was not excluded, the fuel charge was separated from the walls of the propulsion chamber by a gap of 4 mm for the head half-charge and 9 mm for the tail one. The semi-charges were fixed by means of six "slips" sized 50 x 10 mm, made from the same fuel, glued onto each of them. The ends of the semi-charges were armored with glued washers made of nitrolinoleum.

The RSI-12M formulation, consisting of 56% xylidine, 26.7% nitroglycerin, 10.5% dinitrotoluene, 3% centralite, was used in the fuel charge. The composition of the charge also included catalysts and processing additives. An igniter with 80 g of KZDP-1 coarse-grained smoke powder and 2 g of DRP-1 gunpowder, stored in separate percale bags was located between the semi-charges. The current for two MB-2N electric igniters was supplied through wires laid through the central nozzle and the tail semi-charge channel. The total mass of two semi-charges with "slips" and washers was 20.6 kg, the body of the missile part weighed 24.5 kg (26.4 kg with stabilizers).

At the end of the sixties of the 20th century, the charge manufacture from a denser RST-4K fuel was worked out, which made it possible, while maintaining the required weight, to somewhat reduce the size and unify the geometry of the semi-charges. Instead of glued "slips", small ledges were used – ridges on the outer surface, formed in the process of making checkers. Somewhat later, the manufacture of fuel semi-charges was mastered using a special recipe, where the products of the processing of fuel charges extracted from obsolete missiles with an expired warranty

period were used. Such charges with ridges, without glued "slips", were manufactured from alteration recipes in 1975-1980.

The powder charge of the projectile is ignited by pyro-igniters, triggered by current pulses from the current distributor of the fire control system. The duration of a salvo of one BM-21 is 20 seconds. If necessary, a salvo could be fired rather from a remote-control panel taken several tens of meters away than from the cockpit. The M-210F (9M22U) projectile with a high-explosive fragmentation warhead is the most widely used type of BM-21 MLRS projectiles. The length of this projectile with the MRV-U fuse is 2.87 m. The weight with the fuse is 66.4 kg, the warhead weighs 19.18 kg, and the explosive weighs 6.4 kg.

Powder charge (RSI gunpowder - 12 m) weighing 20.45 kg provides the highest projectile speed of 690 m/s. The fuse is cocked after leaving the guide at distances of 150-450 m from the combat vehicle. The nature of the projectile action at the target depends on the installation of the fuse: with an instantaneous actuation, it is predominantly of a fragmentation type, with a delayed actuation, it is predominantly high-explosive⁴³.

According to its technical characteristics, the M-21OF projectile has three maximum firing ranges (depending on the use of various brake rings), which are 12,000, 16,000 and 20,400 meters.

⁴³BM-21 Grad MLRS. Soldat.pro website. URL: https://soldat.pro/2018/07/06/rszo-bm-21-grad/ (accessed on 24.07.2023)

DETERMINATION OF THE SHELLING SECTOR

Direction

In cases of shell hits 7 and 12, clear traces from the detonation of shells remained on the surface, they are identified as craters from shelling at a high incidence angle (see Fig. 41). Using the example of shell hit 12, we compared in detail the formed crater with the crater from shelling at a high angle of impact and proved their compliance. This enabled us to determine the direction from which the shelling was carried out using the fragmentation grooves method (see Fig. 42). In this case, the azimuth was 280 degrees.

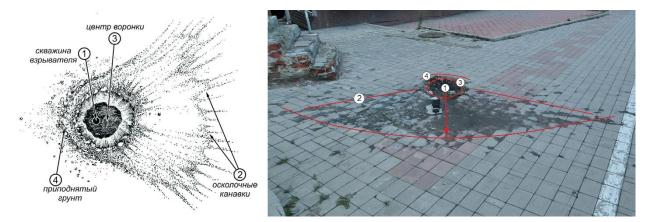


Fig. 41–Determining the type of the crater as exemplified by shell hit 12 (left: scheme of a crater formed after the detonation of a projectile that came into contact with the surface at a large incidence angle⁴⁴; right: the crater at the site of shell hit 12).

⁴⁴ANALYSIS OF CRATERS FROM HIGH-EXPLOSIVE SHELL HITS. "Fair Defense" Non-Government Organization URL: https://oosz.su/node/157 (accessed on 26.07.2023)



Fig. 42 – Determination of the shelling direction by the controlled fragmentation method.

Having examined similarly the crater at the site of shell hit 7 (see Fig.43), we determined the azimuth of the shelling direction -276 degrees.



Fig.43 – *Azimuth determination at the site of shell hit 7.*

Attention should be drawn to the site of shell hit 8, where a direct hit of a rocket in a civilian car was recorded. After the work of the city crews, the remains of cars were removed from the scene, and under one of them, a missile part of the

projectile engine was found in the paving slabs. We were able to determine the angle of incidence of artillery ammunition – it was approximately 54 degrees (see Fig. 44), which allows us to assert that the shelling was carried out at a distance close to the maximum.



Fig. 44 – Determining the angle of impact with a horizontal surface at the site of shell hit 8 of

Shell hit 20 is a camouflet. In this case, the point of entry of the projectile into the asphalt and the area of its detonation, which has an elongated shape, were clearly defined. Thus, this shell hit allows us to determine the direction from which the shelling was carried out that day. In this case, the azimuth was 292 degrees (see Fig.45).



Fig.45 – Azimuth determination at the site of shell hit 20.

Considering the azimuths, we have determined, for further investigation we will take the **average azimuth** as the shelling direction, **which is approximately 283 degrees.** Thus, it can be concluded that the shells were fired from the west to the east along an azimuth of 283 degrees.

Firing range

In accordance with the performance characteristics of the M-12OF projectile, the maximum firing range in our case is up to 20 km. In addition, we know that the projectile incidence angle is approximately 54 degrees. Consequently, the projectiles were fired from the gun at an angle close to 45 degrees, i.e., the projectiles were fired at the maximum distance for the used powder charge.

However, based on the data of the firing tables of Soviet-style guns⁴⁵, it can be stated that artillery fire conducted with an exit angle close to 45 degrees is not fired from a distance of less than 10 km.

In addition, to reduce the dispersion of projectiles in rocket artillery, replaceable brake rings are used, which are installed on the head of the projectile. This also shortens the firing range. Thus, there are three ballistic versions of the projectile: without a brake ring, with a small brake ring and with a large brake ring. Note that the range of projectiles for the Grad MLRS with a large brake ring is at least 10 km.

Based on the direction of the projectiles we determined (**283 degrees with an error of ± 15 degrees**) and the firing range (**10-20 km**), we can map the sector from which the shelling of the Kievskiy district of Donetsk was conducted. In addition, based on the maps of the armed confrontation⁴⁶ in Ukraine, we can plot the line of demarcation on the map (see Fig. 46). Slightly more than half of the sector under consideration lies behind the line of demarcation from the side of the UAF. It is worth noting that Grad MLRSs are usually placed no closer than 3-4 km from the contact line so that it does not become an easy target for the opposite side. Proceeding from this fact, it can be argued that the shelling was carried out from the territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed formations. This sector covers the settlements of Krasnogorovka - Nevelskoye - Netaylovo, controlled by the Ukrainian armed formations.

⁴⁵ Ministry of Defense of the USSR Tables of firing by M-210F high-explosive fragmentation projectiles. 3Rd edn., Voenizdat, 1985. 110 p.

⁴⁶ SMO Map (published on 29.04.2023) SMO Map Website. URL: https://κaptacbo.pф/?x=4202778.89531&y=6133450.67333&z=12.71226&r=0&l=1000000111000100 (accessed on 31.07.2023)

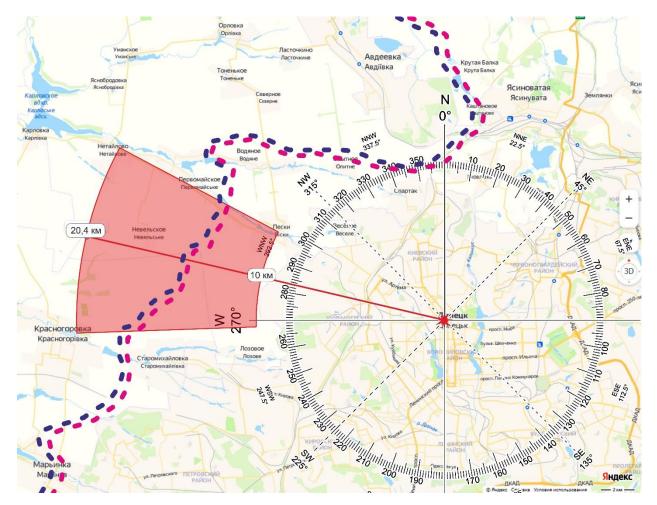


Fig. 46 – The shelling sector.

MILITARY PRESENCE

As is known from open sources, on January 24, 2023, units of the 59th Motorized Brigade of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, defending the village of Vodianoye, suffered losses and retreated to reserve lines, and marines of the 36th Separate Marine Brigade were sent to hold the line of contact⁴⁷. In addition, as of February 27, 2023, units of the 59th Motorized Brigade were deployed in the second echelon in Galitsinovka (the settlement that is located about 10 km north-west of Nevelskoye and 7 km west of Netailovo) in case of breaking through positions on the front line⁴⁸, which indirectly confirms the fact that the 59th Motorized Brigade operated in this direction.

The 59th Motorized Brigade includes a brigade artillery group, consisting of an artillery battalion, a self-propelled battalion and a rocket battery⁴⁹. The brigade artillery group is also armed with the BM-21 Grad MLRS, according to the MilitaryLand.net website, in the amount of more than five systems⁵⁰. It is worth noting that a brigade artillery group is also subordinate to the 36th Separate Marine Brigade, which includes a rocket-propelled artillery battalion, armed with more than five Grad MLRS⁵¹.

In addition, on February 4, 2023, a video was published on the YouTube channel "59th Separate Motorized Brigade of the Ukrainian Ground Forces", which demonstrates the work of artillerymen of the 59th SMBr from the brigade's positions in the territory of the Donetsk People's Republic temporarily occupied by Ukraine, and a serviceman of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with the call sign "Raven" talks about the operation of the rocket launcher⁵². On April 6, 2023, a video was published

⁴⁷Offensive in the Donetsk direction: the situation as of January 24, 2023 at 16.00 (published on 24.01.2023) "Rybar" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/rybar/42948 (accessed on 02.08.2023)

⁴⁸Donetsk direction: the situation as of February 27, 2023 at 15.00 (published on 27.02.2023) "Rybar" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/rybar/44039 (accessed on 02.08.2023)

⁴⁹ 59th Motorized Brigade (Ukraine) (published on 26.05.2023) Ukrainian version of "Wikipedia" URL: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/59-та_окрема_мотопіхотна_бригада_(Україна)#Структура (accessed on 01.08.2023)

⁵⁰ 59th Motorized Brigade. MilitaryLand.net URL: https://militaryland.net/ukraine/armed-forces/59th-motorized-brigade/ (accessed on 01.08.2023)

⁵¹ 59th Motorized Brigade. MilitaryLand.net URL: https://militaryland.net/ukraine/armed-forces/59th-motorized-brigade/ (accessed on 02.08.2023)

⁵² UAF destroy the occupiers in the Donetsk Region (published on 04.02.2023) YouTube Video hosting. URL: https://youtu.be/RhRFmab8kGk (accessed on 01.08.2023)

on the same YouTube channel in which a serviceman of the Ukrainian Armed Forces with the call sign "Barber" talks about the BM-21 Grad MLRS, and also launches a missile together with other servicemen⁵³. On June 26, 2023, another video was published on the aforementioned YouTube channel with footage of the operation of the BM-21 Grad MLRS: in the video in question, UAF servicemen Sergey and "Voron" (see Fig. 47) launch missiles from MLRS from the positions of the 59th SMBr.



Fig. 47 – An artilleryman of the 59th SMBr with the call sign "Voron"⁵⁴.

We will also note that on April 21, 2023, information was published on the "People's Militia of the DPR" Telegram channel about the assault by Russian servicemen of the position of the 59th SMBr near Nevelskoye⁵⁵, and on April 23 - they published a video with footage of artillery work on the strongholds of the 59th SMBr near Nevelskoye⁵⁶.

⁵³ DESTROYED THE TARGET FROM THE GRAD WITH THE FIRST SHOT (published on 19.02.2022) YouTube Video hosting. URL: https://youtu.be/02_tAezj85Q (accessed on 01.08.2023)

⁵⁴ The Donetsk Land is on fire! TSN filmed a real artillery duel! (published on 06.06.2023) YouTube Video hosting. URL: https://youtu.be/DjHXHbnynac (accessed on 01.08.2023)

⁵⁵ Soldiers of the 110th brigade stormed the enemy positions near Nevelskoye (published on 14.03.2022) "The DPR People's Militia" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/nm_dnr/10238 (accessed on 02.08.2023)

⁵⁶ Artillery of the 110th brigade destroys the UAF defense in Nevelskoye (published on 14.03.2022) "The DPR People's Militia" Telegram channel. URL: https://t.me/nm_dnr/10246 (accessed on 02.08.2023)

On April 30, 2023, the 24th TV channel website published news about the death of a soldier of the 59th Motorized Brigade named after Yakov Handzyuk on April 23 near the village of Nevelskoye⁵⁷.

A Ukrainian blogger who administers the "Dnipro **+**" Telegram channel and collects and analyzes intelligence information from publicly available sources has created a map of hostilities with the line along which the front runs, indicating armed units in each of the directions. The information presented on this map (see Fig. 48), confirms our assertion that in the sector under consideration Krasnogorovka - Nevelskoye - Netaylovo the servicemen of the 59th Separate Motorized Brigade were deployed.

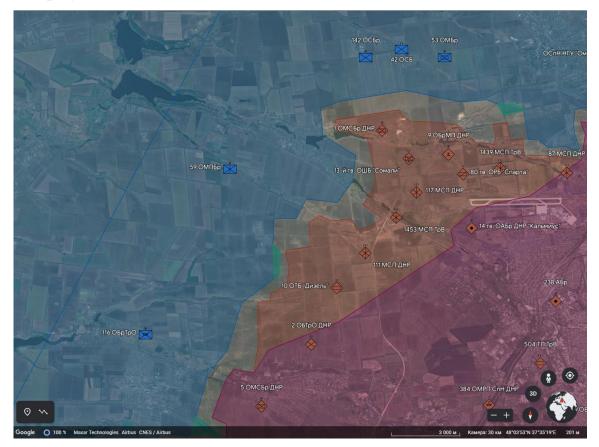


Fig. 48 – A fragment of the map of hostilities created by the Ukrainian blogger-administrator of the "Dnipro #" Telegram channel ⁵⁸.

⁵⁷ Before the war he was a farmer: defender Fyodor Striga died (published on 30.04.2023) 24th TV Channel website. URL: https://24tv.ua/ru/poteri-ukrainy-v-vojne-v-doneckoj-oblasti-pogib-fedor-strigun-do-vojny-byl-zemledelcem-24-kanal_n2304321 (accessed on 01.08.2023)

⁵⁸ The front line map. Google Maps Service. URL: https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/viewer?ll=51.39924654535786%2C35.554828484193315&z=6&mid=1eFmrjREW1Hr73m 9ybVOUjmOAd990Ifs (accessed on 02.08.2023)

At the same time, it should be noted that since 2015, in this sector have already the UAF has equipped fortified artillery positions, with established communication links, and the organized supply of weapons, ammunition, fuel, and food.

As for the persons who could order the shelling of a civilian medical facility, and civilians using 122-mm projectiles, the commander of the 59th SMBr, Colonel Vadim Sukharevskyi, is primarily responsible for this (see Fig. 49).

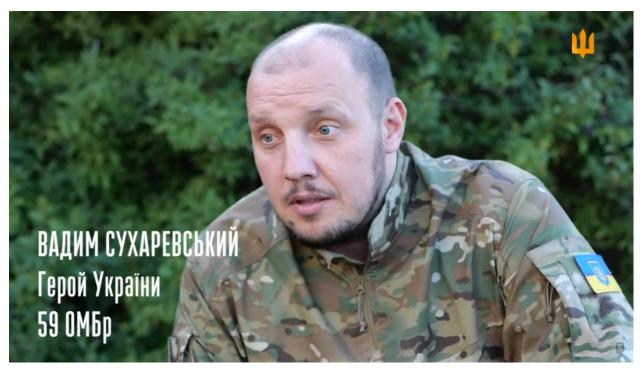


Fig. 49 – Commander of the 59th SMBr, Colonel Vadim Olegovych Sukharevskyi⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ Commander of the 59th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade named after Yakov Handziuk, Hero of Ukraine Vadym Sukharevskyi (published on 17.08.2022) YouTube Video hosting. URL: https://youtu.be/S0oU0BurMw8 (accessed on 01.08.2023)

CONCLUSIONS

As it follows from the above, on April 28, 2023, at 1:10 p.m. and 1:11 p.m. Moscow time, the Kievskiy district of Donetsk, in particular, the Republican Traumatological Center, public transport and places of mass gathering of people, came under artillery fire from the Grad MLRS. The shells flew in a direction from west to east (azimuth 283 degrees, error making \pm 15 degrees).

All shell hits fell on densely populated residential areas of the city and led to damage to civilian objects, death and injury to civilians. Thus, the principles of selectivity and proportionality were violated.

As a result of the analysis of news videos and information from the Internet, it was found that the Rocket Artillery Battery of the Armed Forces of Ukraine could be located in the sector from which the shelling was carried out. This unit is subordinate to the 59th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade named after Yakov Handziuk under the command of Colonel Vadym Olegovych Sukharevskyi.

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS

Indiscriminate shelling of a densely populated residential area in the town of Makeyevka, in which civilians were killed and injured, is a crime for which responsibility is provided by the norms of national legislation of Ukraine and by the norms of international law.

In compliance with **Art. 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine**, for "... use of methods of the warfare prohibited by international instruments, or any other violations of rules of the warfare recognized by international instruments consented to be binding by the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, and also giving an order to commit any such actions", shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of eight to twelve years., and if he same acts accompanied with an intended murder, shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of ten to fifteen years, or life imprisonment.

In compliance with Art. 13 of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, concerning the protection of victims of armed conflicts of a non-international character, dated 8 June 1977: "The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack. Acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population are prohibited".

In compliance with **Rule 71 of Customary International Humanitarian Law** (Volume 1, ICRC, 2006): "States must never make civilians the object of attack and must consequently never use weapons that are incapable of distinguishing between civilian and military targets"

"The use of weapons which are by nature indiscriminate is prohibited".

In compliance with **Art. 3 common to all Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949,** extending its effect to non-international armed conflicts, "persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed 'hors de combat' by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria".

To this end, violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds and mutilation, are prohibited inter alia with respect to the above-mentioned persons.

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Artyoma Street, another one incoming shelling closer to Panfilov Ave.
(published on 28.04.2023) Astrakhan Military Correspondent Telegram Channel.
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