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Russia is emboldened by the shortage of missiles to defend Ukrainian cities



Limited battlefield success and the absence of significant territorial gains are increasingly forcing Russia's military and political leadership to rely on large-scale missile and drone attacks against Ukraine's rear areas as a tool of strategic pressure.

Attacks on major cities are intended to compensate for the limited effectiveness of offensive operations, inflict maximum damage on civilian infrastructure, increase psychological pressure on the population, and force Ukraine to accept Moscow's political demands.

On two occasions, on 2 July and 6 July, Russian forces carried out massive combined strikes against Ukraine using attack drones and air- and ground-launched missiles.

The primary target of both attacks was Kyiv and the Kyiv region, where more than 60 people were killed.

The strikes on densely populated residential areas, medical facilities, and critical infrastructure bear all the hallmarks of deliberate attacks on civilians.

Particular attention should be paid to the outcome of repelling the **attack on 6 July**, during which not a single ballistic missile was intercepted.

At the same time, **Ukrainian air defences** continue to intercept Russian drones with an effectiveness rate of approximately 92%, and cruise missiles at around 94%.

This is because Ukraine's air defence forces are well equipped with systems designed to counter aerial threats of this class, employ them with a high degree of professionalism, possess adequate stocks of missiles and ammunition, and operate a well-developed, layered air defence network.

This may indicate an acute shortage or depletion of interceptor missile stocks for modern long-range air and missile defence systems.

Russia relies on ballistic weapons

Russia is increasingly relying on ballistic weapons because they remain the most difficult type of target to intercept.

The lack – or in many cases the complete absence – of sufficient interceptor missiles for Patriot or SAMP/T systems directly increases the effectiveness of Russian strikes against Ukrainian cities and civilian infrastructure.

The latest escalation demonstrates the inadequate effectiveness of the current policy to deter Russia

Conducting these massive attacks on the eve of the next **NATO summit** has an obvious political dimension.

The Kremlin is using missile terror as a tool of psychological and political pressure on Western countries, attempting to influence the summit agenda and discourage decisions aimed at further strengthening Ukraine's defence capabilities.

The latest escalation demonstrates the inadequate effectiveness of the current policy to deter Russia.

Strengthening military assistance to Ukraine

The allies' response should include long-term decisions to strengthen military assistance to Ukraine, including increased deliveries of modern air and missile defence systems, stable supplies of interceptor missiles, the conclusion of multi-year defence agreements, and the establishment of guaranteed mechanisms for financing Ukraine's defence.

Effective protection of Ukrainian cities also requires expanding Ukraine's ability to strike Russian military infrastructure deep within

Russian territory.

Over nearly four and a half years of war, Ukraine has received 600 interceptor missiles for ballistic missile defence from its allies

Providing long-range precision weapons and removing political restrictions on their use against military airfields, ammunition depots, logistics hubs, and missile launch sites would reduce the intensity of regular missile attacks by neutralising offensive capabilities directly at their source.

Over nearly four and a half years of war, Ukraine has received 600 **interceptor missiles** for ballistic missile defence from its allies, intended for Patriot and SAMP/T systems.

By comparison, the **United States** used approximately 700 interceptor missiles of this class during just 4.5 weeks of combat in the Persian Gulf, after which it reportedly suspended deliveries to Ukraine, citing insufficient reserve stocks.

Russian challenge ahead of the NATO summit

Moscow became aware of this situation and subsequently stepped up its campaign of ballistic missile attacks against the civilian population of Kyiv.



The US war with Iran became a major strategic windfall for Vladimir Putin

In addition, during just a few months of the Persian Gulf crisis, Russia earned tens of billions of dollars in additional revenue by selling oil at elevated prices.

In effect, the US war with Iran became a major strategic windfall for Vladimir Putin. Whether this was purely coincidental remains unclear.

For this reason, the **NATO summit in Ankara** on 7–8 July must provide a clear response to these challenges.

If the summit produces only half-measures, Moscow is likely to interpret the outcome as a signal to continue escalating the war in Ukraine.

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