As Witkoff & Kushner talk with Putin and then with Ukraine, Russia's war continues on the ground and in the air.

UK Defense Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine as of Dec. 5.

As Friday's British Defence Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine indicates, last week the Russian forces continued to attack the Ukrainian forces at a number of locations from the area south of Sudzha in Russia's Kursk region toward the Ukrainian city of Sumy (not shown) to the area on the border north of Kharkiv and at a number of points along the long contact line between the forces in eastern and southeastern Ukraine that extends from the area north and east of Kupiansk to the area in Donetsk region west of Rubizhne in Luhansk region and Chasiv Yar, toward the city of Pokrovsk, and at several locations along the long contact line between the forces in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions in southeastern Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reported that over the seven days last week from Sunday, Nov. 30 through Saturday, Dec. 6, the Russian forces conducted a total of 1,247 attacks against the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns in northeastern, eastern, and southeastern Ukraine. As in previous weeks, the largest number of Russian attacks last week were directed against the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, which, if taken, would open a pathway northward toward the cities and towns in Donetsk region that are still held by Ukraine. The General Staff reported that over the seven days last week the Russian forces conducted a total of 349 attacks against the forces defending Pokrovsk and the area around it. The Russian forces have moved into some sections of the city but the Ukrainian forces continue to hold most of the city. But if the Russian forces take the city that will open a pathway northward

toward Kostyantynivka, Slovyansk, Kramatorsk, and other cities in the northern and western portions of Donetsk region that are still held by the Ukrainian forces. Even without that pathway northward last week, the Russian forces conducted 172 attacks toward Kostyantynivka.

And while the Russian forces continue to attack the Ukrainian forces defending Pokrovsk, Kostyantynivka, and other cities in northeastern and eastern Ukraine, Russia also continues its air war against the people of Ukraine. On Friday night into early Saturday morning, for example, Russia fired 653 drones and 51 missiles toward almost 30 separate locations in Ukraine. The attacks were focused on energy facilities and critical infrastructure but hit a number of apartment buildings in Kyiv and other cities. And importantly, the attacks also cut off power to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, increasing the risk of a potentially catastrophic meltdown at the plant, which has six reactors.

Worldwide attention has understandably been focused on the continuing discussions of the "Peace Plan" put forward by President Trump on Nov. 20 – discussions that continued last Tuesday when U.S. presidential envoy Steve Witkoff and Jarod Kushner met with President Putin in Moscow and then met with Ukrainian representatives in Florida over three days from Thursday through Saturday. While we don't know precisely what was discussed in those meetings, it seems likely that Witkoff and Kushner discussed with Putin Ukraine's objections to some of the provisions in the plan and then discussed with the Ukrainian officials Putin's objections and possible alternative provisions that might make it acceptable for the Russians. But there is of course no reason to think Ukraine will accept those provisions. And so the war continues with no end in sight.

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