

# Ukraine continues attacks on civilians after capture of Avdeevka

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Crater left by a Ukrainian missile attack outside the Nadezhda Krupskaya Library in Donetsk, Feb. 20.

Feb 21 — “The reality of Donetsk,” Alexander Kots, a correspondent for Komsomolskaya Pravda, wrote yesterday in the city after his visit to the recently captured town of Avdeevka. “In cafes there are almost always free seats near the windows. The population prefers not to sit there. If there is a bombing, there is a risk of being hit by broken glass,” he explained, adding that “in general, it is better to go to places with a basement. Even in the city center.”

The false normality in which the capital of the Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) lived during the years of the Minsk agreements, in which Ukrainian bombings from the surroundings of towns such as Avdeevka, Peski or Marinka only reached the periphery, is already a vague memory of the past. Today the city lives in a dynamic of constant worry about where and when artillery shells will impact.

Although Russia has not been able to coherently present many of the objectives for which it began its special military operation, these are the objectives with regard to Donbass: reaching the administrative borders of the former regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. For this objective, it was essential for Russia to overcome Artyomovsk, in the same way it was to capture the Ukrainian forts on the first line of defense around Donetsk.

However, in this sector of the front, Moscow’s need to begin moving the front, and with it the firing positions, away from the Ukrainian troops has played a particularly important role. This is the reason for the local offensives against Peski, captured in the fall of 2022 after a tough battle; Marinka, from whose ruins Ukraine ended up withdrawing last December; and Avdeevka, taken this past weekend.

Russian sources, who have presented the capture of Avdeevka as an important step in the double objective of advancing towards the administrative limits of the Donetsk region and the attempt to improve the security of the population of its most populated area, have also insisted that the Ukrainian evacuation from the city was not going to be an automatic solution. In the days since the confirmation of the

Ukrainian withdrawal from Avdeevka, Ukraine has wanted to make clear both that it has the means to continue threatening Donetsk and that it persists in its intentions.

### **Donetsk library attacked again**

A year ago, on Feb. 19, 2023, Ukrainian artillery attacked the center of Donetsk, specifically the regional library, located on Artyom Street, the city's main avenue. Yesterday, Ukrainian troops again attacked the same place in the most central part of the capital of Donbass, causing material damage and injuring two women.

Shortly before, a bombing on the outskirts of the city had cost the life of a resident in one of the continuous Ukrainian bombings that never appear in the news unless they cause a high number of victims. However, their indiscriminate nature makes them the main danger for the population of Donetsk, whose security is not guaranteed at any time or in any place, without this situation having created any reaction among Ukraine's partners, whose expressions of concern are limited to the Ukrainian civilian population residing on the "correct" side of the front.

Yesterday was not an indiscriminate bombing but a directed attack carried out with weapons much more precise than the 155mm artillery or the Grad of Soviet origin. According to local authorities, Ukraine used its U.S. HIMARS [multiple rocket launchers] to attack the most central street of the most populated city in Donbass. Whether the identification of the weapon is correct or not, it is long-range heavy artillery, used on two occasions against a library building. One of the bombs, which exploded next to the building, created a huge crater deeper than a grown man. The second, in the backyard, destroyed all the windows in the building.

The library, which bears the name of [Soviet revolutionary] Nadezhda Krupskaya, perhaps one more symbolic element that has made it a desirable target for the artillery of Ukraine trying to eliminate all traces of the Soviet past, is one of the cultural centers of Donetsk, where all types of events, meetings and events are held.

Even in war, life and culture must continue, as long as the artillery allows it – despite those words of [former Ukrainian President] Petro Poroshenko in which he stated that Donbass children will sit in basements while the Ukrainians continue their lives and ended by stating that it would be like this because they do not know how to do anything.

### **Attacks on civilians continue**

The bombings of recent days have a clear message: Ukraine not only continues to have positions close to the capital of Donbass, but it also has long-range ammunition for which it does not need to be at close range. Moving the front away from the city of Donetsk continues to be an objective necessity given the intentions demonstrated by yesterday's bombings and those that have occurred since the weekend, when part of the Ukrainian troops were busy withdrawing from their main fort.

Ukraine has fiercely defended its positions in Avdeevka or Marinka, where fierce battles occurred even during the low-intensity war years of the Minsk ceasefire, because maintaining some control over the city of Donetsk depended on it.

The Ukrainian defeat in Avdeevka is not so much due to the loss of these privileged positions from which to condemn the population to eternal insecurity, but rather due to the demolition of the most important fort, with the weakening of the defenses that this implies. But in terms of attack, Ukraine now has ammunition and carte blanche to attack Donetsk and other cities located in its surroundings at will.

Removing Ukrainian troops from the urban points that they usually attack with the sole objective of punishing the population for their disloyalty to the country that declared an anti-terrorist operation against them and denied them salaries, pensions and even bank accounts, is essential to prevent Kiev from using its most basic artillery, that which requires closeness in order to act.

So Ukraine will continue to have long-range artillery and guided systems with which to attack targets, although the higher cost and lower availability of this ammunition should significantly reduce its use. However, Ukraine wanted to make it clear this week that, as long as it is materially possible, it will continue to use its weapons to shoot at civilian targets it deems appropriate, such as those named after historical figures linked to the Soviet Union.

*Translated by Melinda Butterfield*

Source: [Slavyangrad.es](https://slavyangrad.es)

