

# The awful costs of tying Ukraine's hands in the war

By Anna Husarska  
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Municipal cemetery Number 17 in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Aug. 24. (Video: Anna Husarska)

The day after I returned to Poland from yet another delivery of a vehicle to the Ukrainian front — my 19th — I saw the news that Russia had once again attacked Ukrainian cities. The list of targeted towns sounded so very much like my own recent itinerary.

Lviv, Vinnytsia, Odessa, Kryvyi Rih, Dnipro and Kharkiv — this was my 1,167-mile route. I had ice cream in Lviv's main square, then a lunch of vareniki in Odessa, where I was honored to be the only foreigner to carry a huge Ukrainian flag up the Potemkin stairs in celebration of Ukraine's independence day. Back on the road, I briefly considered resting for the night in Kryvyi Rih; the hotel Aurora, where I would have stayed, was destroyed in the recent Russian attack that [killed four people](#). I stopped in Dnipro, where I have been buying [tourniquets](#) for civilians and soldiers. Finally, I arrived in Kharkiv, and took a stroll in a park with a friend and listened to a young girl playing violin. This past weekend, several buildings in

Kharkiv were obliterated by Russian ballistic missiles; since my stroll, seven people have been [killed by glide bombs](#) in the city, including a 14-year-old girl.

Russia's recent assault was, [according to Ukrainian officials](#), the largest since the full-scale invasion in February 2022. This was the “escalation” so feared by Washington. President Joe Biden has [called the attacks](#) “outrageous.”

But this “escalation” would not have been as devastating, and many of the “outrageous” attacks would not have taken place at all, if Ukraine had been allowed to target the places the attacks originated from — the airfields and also ammunition depots, fuel storage and command centers across the Russian border. If Ukraine had permission to use Western-supplied weapons beyond a restricted limit, it could have nipped this Russian evil in the bud.

The Institute for the Study of War [recently published a list](#) of known Russian military assets (geographical coordinates included) within ATACMS range — targets Kyiv could strike only if Washington lifted its restrictions. The most recent argument against giving Ukraine more latitude was that it would make little difference: Russia, it has been argued, had moved too many of its targets out of reach. I am not a military expert, just a volunteer. But ISW's [interactive map](#) has a lot of red pins around Ukraine's eastern and southern borders, marking no fewer than 245 known Russian military and paramilitary objects, including 16 air bases. Of these 245, just 20 can be hit by HIMARS; the rest would require ATACMS.

All that Ukrainians want is to have a safe and normal life.

In Kharkiv, I drove to the cemetery and filmed some footage. There seem to be twice as many graves of killed soldiers as I saw there exactly a year ago. I started reading the names, dates of birth and death, calculating ages, looking at the faces — but it was too much.

I wish someone in the Biden administration would look at my video and ask themselves, “How many more graves will there be next year if we keep Ukraine from fighting back?”

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<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/09/03/ukraine-russia-escalation-bombing-civilians/>