



Operation Vivaldi: Ukrainian counteroffensive catches Kremlin off guard in Donbas

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The "second season" of the offensive led by the Third Army Corps and Gen. Andrii Biletskyi marks a strategic turning point north of Donetsk, blocking the Russian vice and bringing Kyiv's soldiers back into Luhansk.

Unexpectedly, Ukrainian armed forces have brought about a significant shift in the balance of the eastern front. The offensive baptized "**Operation Vivaldi**" — named after the Venetian composer whose notes accompany the bulletins of the units — is redefining the geography of the conflict in the northern Donetsk region.

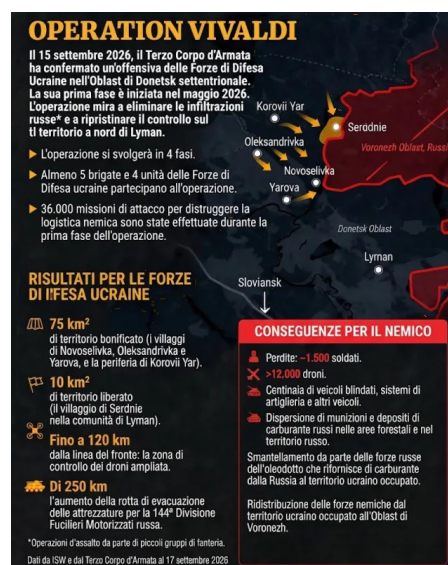
Led by the Third Army Corps (heir and development of the operational units linked to the Azov battalion) under the command of Brigadier General **Andrii Biletskyi**, the military initiative has dealt a severe blow to Moscow's logistics and strategic plans, which aimed at total control of the Donbass by the end of 2026.

The two phases of the offensive and the liberated territories

The operation is divided into two distinct moments:

- **The first phase (winter-spring, conducted in maximum secrecy):** Allowed the clearing of Russian infiltration groups and the recapture of an area of **75 square kilometers**, neutralizing enemy tactics based on small units camouflaged in the *gray zone*.
- **The "second season":** Led to a further advance of approximately **45 square kilometers**, concentrated on objectives of the highest strategic value.

Among the most significant successes stands out the capture of **Shandryholove**, a fortified village situated between two lakes that serves as a crucial road junction toward the Ukrainian strongholds of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk. With this maneuver, Kiev's units swept away months of Russian territorial gains and recorded a symbolic and operational return of some kilometers also in the nearby **Luhansk region**.



Tactical Innovation: Drones, Ground Robots and the Neutralization of the "Rubicon"

From a doctrinal and military point of view, Operation Vivaldi is already being studied for advanced coordination between infantry, artillery, missiles, electronic warfare and sophisticated airspace management.

A decisive factor was the success in countering and neutralizing the **Rubicon**, the unit of Russian drone operators considered Moscow's flagship in the area. By blinding the adversary's reconnaissance capabilities, Ukrainian forces were able to move armored vehicles and units without being intercepted. To this was added the pioneering use of **hexacopters and autonomous ground robots** equipped with explosive charges, deployed in the rear areas to sow chaos, block reinforcements and partially replace the tasks of paratroopers.

Strategic consequences and losses

According to data released by Ukrainian commands and partly confirmed by independent observers and bloggers close to Kremlin circles, the offensive caused the encirclement of several enemy units and heavy losses for Russian forces, estimated at around three thousand men (among killed, wounded and prisoners) in the second phase alone.

The northern front of the pincer on Donetsk now appears blocked: for Moscow the reorganization will require months, forcing Russian leadership to evaluate the relocation of reserves southward in the Dobropillja area. However, constant pressure and Kyiv's tactical successes demonstrate that Ukrainian defensive resilience has evolved into a counterattack capability capable of calling into question the Kremlin's entire strategy in the eastern sector.