

## Russia's Relentless Strikes on Ukraine Escalate as U.S. Halts Military Aid

July 4, 2025

— Categories: Defense & Security



Russia's aerial assault on Ukraine has reached record-breaking levels in 2025, with deadly consequences for civilians and rising concern over Ukraine's ability to defend itself. As the United States halts its promised arms shipments, Ukraine now faces one of its most dangerous phases in the ongoing war.

The latest wave of attacks came on June 28 and 29, when over 500 Russian drones and missiles rained down on Ukrainian cities. According to the Institute for the Study of War, these strikes mark a new high in frequency and scale, pushing civilian casualties to alarming

levels. Since the start of this year, around 1,000 civilians have been killed in attacks, and thousands more have been injured.

Much of this increase stems from Russia's growing ability to produce drones and missiles at home. Christina Harward, a Russia analyst with the Institute, said that Russia has shifted from using imported Iranian drones to building its own, often cheaper and deadlier models. These newer drones not only include thermal cameras and artificial intelligence for better precision but also feature decoy designs, and some are even made of plywood to overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses.

Ukraine's Operation Spiderweb, a stealthy drone strike across the Russian border on June 1, reportedly inflicted heavy damage. While the operation showcased Ukraine's resilience and capability, Russia's intensifying response suggests the country was already planning larger-scale retaliation.

Complicating matters further, U.S. military aid has now been paused. This includes critical supplies like Patriot air defense systems and missile tools that have proven vital in intercepting Russia's most destructive ballistic weapons. Without them, Ukraine is increasingly exposed.

John Herbst, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, pointed out that Russian President Vladimir Putin is turning to missile and drone warfare because his ground forces have failed to meet their objectives. "Putin can't win with soldiers, so now he's relying on mass attacks and getting away with it," Herbst said.

Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, has been one of the hardest-hit areas. Over 285 drones and 65 missiles have struck the city just since June began, killing at least 42 people and injuring more than 230. Analysts warn that some drones now carry chemical payloads or are designed to explode long after being downed, increasing the danger to civilians.

On June 24, a Russian missile strike in Dnipro targeted civilian infrastructure and a passenger train. The result: 21 lives lost and more than 300 injured.

As the war drags on and international support wavers, Ukraine is left defending its people with limited tools. And with Russian attacks growing more sophisticated and brutal, the stakes for Ukrainian civilians and the global response have never been higher.