# Ukrainian Forces Strengthened Against Renewed Russian Offensive



**Ukrainian Forces Bolstered Amid Renewed Russian Offensive**

**May 17, 2024—Eastern Ukraine**

Over the last two weeks, Russian military forces have intensified their operations along the Belgorod-Kharkiv regional border, seeking to extend their control as Ukraine waits for new military aid from the US and Germany. According to the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), Russian President Vladimir Putin has underestimated the impact this incoming aid will have on Ukrainian defense capabilities.

The ISW's latest analysis suggests that Putin and his military command are not fully accounting for potential Ukrainian tactical counterattacks or a significant counteroffensive once the new equipment arrives. Putin has maintained a belief that Ukrainian forces will struggle to reclaim occupied territories, a view which the ISW deems fundamentally flawed.

In response to ongoing pressures, Ukraine is undertaking several measures to replenish its military ranks. President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a new law permitting certain convicts to serve in the military in exchange for potential parole, a move targeting up to 20,000 prisoners. This measure, reflecting tactics previously employed by Russia, arrives as Ukraine faces a pressing need for more troops along its extended frontline.

In parallel, Ukraine has also lowered the draft eligibility age and heightened enforcement to prevent draft evasion. These efforts coincide with ongoing significant mobilizations by Russian forces, who continue their offensive push across multiple regions.

Despite the current challenges, Ukrainian officials report that the situation in the northeast has stabilized. However, the redistribution of troops to this area has increased vulnerability along other front sectors where Russian forces are also active.

Russia’s offensive in northeast Ukraine has been described by Putin as an effort to create a buffer zone, without plans to capture Kharkiv City itself. The ongoing conflict continues to evolve as both nations adapt to new strategies and resources.

**By News Desk**