# Ukrainian Forces Destroy Russian Missile System in Belgorod with U.S.-Supplied HIMARS



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On June 3, 2024, reports emerged of Ukrainian forces successfully destroying a Russian S-300/S-400 missile system in Belgorod, Russia, using a U.S.-supplied High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). The attack, which happened over the weekend, also targeted the launcher's support vehicles. Footage shared by Ukrainian journalist Yaroslav Trofimov on the social media platform X showed the missile system engulfed in flames and emitting black smoke.

This strike occurred following the recent U.S. decision to permit Ukraine to use American rockets against targets within Russia. This represents a significant shift in U.S. policy, as such actions had previously deterred future American aid. The strike, which hit Belgorod, a region 20 miles north of the Russia-Ukraine border, involved multiple HIMARS launches.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky welcomed the U.S. policy change, citing enhanced protection against Russian aggression. Russian state media reported that air defense systems intercepted 14 rockets but did not detail the full extent of the damage.

Belgorod has been a strategic base for Russian military operations targeting Ukrainian border towns. Ukrainian forces, including the 36th Marine Brigade and the 71st Jager Brigade, have been engaged in fierce battles to counter Russian advances in this region.

Following the attack, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov warned of “fatal consequences” if Western weapons continued to be used against Russian targets. Despite the warnings, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg defended the alliance's right to help Ukraine under international law. The Netherlands also announced its intention to permit Ukraine to use its F-16 fighter jets against Russian targets.

In response to the HIMARS attack, Russian military bloggers shared footage on Telegram, showing the aftermath with extensive destruction and fires raging in the Belgorod region. The attack exemplifies a new phase of the conflict, marked by increased use of Western weapons systems and heightened tensions between Russia, Ukraine, and NATO allies.

This event highlights the evolving dynamics of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, with significant implications for future military engagements and international relations.