

Interview of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation General of the Army Sergei Shoigu

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– Mr Shoigu, how would you describe the general current situation in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

– All arms and branches of the Armed Forces, including the nuclear triad, operate in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the decrees of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Federation, our President.

– What is the current situation in Ukraine?

– In fact, there is a big, complicated combat work carried out with honour by our servicemen, by servicemen of the Lugansk and Donetsk people's republics, as well as by other units and volunteers involved in this operation.

Lugansk People's Republic has been liberated, the advancement in the Donetsk People's Republic is in progress. A part of Kherson and Zaporozhye region are also under control.

And in this regard, I cannot help but emphasise that we are currently at war not only with Ukraine or Ukrainian Army, but with the collective West. Because Ukraine has almost run out of the armament that it had at its disposal. It is former Soviet weaponry. Various Young Europeans, especially zealous ones, are striving. It seems like they have cleared out everything they had, all the depots were thoroughly swept for transferring it all.

We constantly strike it all out and it is the time when we actually at war with the collective West and NATO.

When we mention it, we mean not only the armament that is supplied in a large number, and we definitely find ways and methods to counter this armament, but also the systems: communication systems, data-processing and reconnaissance systems, satellite reconnaissance systems.

Imagine that they are supported, or rather, we are countered by almost all NATO satellite group: according to our estimates, over 70 military and more than 200 civilian satellites. They operate for reconnoitering the location of our units.

And it is followed by supplying the items called high-precision armament. We are surprised that there were attempts to conceal its number. It can be a secret for a wide range of people, but not for us.

We understand why this data is concealed from the wide public. That is because we see attacks of this armament at civilian population almost every day.

Literally yesterday civilian people were killed by a strike of this kind of armament and it was not the first death. Attacks are launched at hospitals and crowded places. This kind of, as we thought, uncontrollableness is actually a total controllableness. The controllableness to quite a large number of Western instructors and curators. The last group of former and active servicemen that has arrived was composed of 150 persons. Almost all of them are commanders. The Western command is deployed in Kiev and guides all the operations.

We also understand that, at the initial stage, the Armed Forces of Ukraine consisted of about 201-202 thousand people. During this time, they have suffered casualties of over 100 thousand: 61,207 persons and 49,368 persons wounded. These are quite considerable casualties. When it comes to a bit more than 200 thousand servicemen and over 100 thousand casualties, it means half of the army is lost.

That is why they conduct the forth wave of mobilisation, about 300 thousand people have been mobilised. And, as you possibly can see in various channels and information sources, this work continues in different directions, as it were trapping 'from a beach to a railway station'.

It is necessary to mention the instructors. And not just instructors, but mercenaries that operate amid this environment, and there are currently a bit more than 1,000 of them involved directly in situ. Most of them have gone away or died, over 2,000 mercenaries have died.

But they, however, tried and are trying to make their contribution... The main point is not their arrival, the main point is that they are actually recruited in state custody.

It means that the countries they come from actually recruit these mercenaries or turn a blind eye to those who are tasked to recruit them.

I cannot help but mention our casualties. Our current fatal casualties are 5,937 persons. And I have to distinguish our comrades who courageously perform their duty. I also have to mention our medical professionals: over 90% have returned to duty from the total of wounded personnel. They are those who have come through our hospitals, medical facilities, who have returned to duty and continue their service.

And here I would return to the situation in Ukraine: we continue fulfilling the tasks we are ordered to. Yes, it is not easy. Sometimes it is very far from easiness. But we will fulfil them.

– The President of Russia has made a decision to initiate partial mobilisation. Please, comment in more detail its procedure. Who is to be conscripted? What will be the number of conscripts? What procedures will be applied to conscripts from the reserve?

– You are right: exactly from the reserve. They are not some people who have never seen anything related to the army... They are definitely those who have served, who have a military profession, a profession that is currently necessary in the Armed Forces, who have combat experience.

And, of course, I want to precede the questions that can appear in this regard: there is nothing to do with mobilising or conscripting students that currently study in higher educational institutions. All of them attend classes and nobody is going to conscript or to mobilise them.

The same is about those who are currently in draft service. They are neither involved in it. They are not to be mobilised or sent to be involved in the special military operation. Our conscripts continue serving at the territory of the Russian Federation as they did before.

That is because we have got an enormous mobilisation resource, the resource of those who have served. There are about 25 million of those who have combat experience and military profession.

Therefore you can understand that this mobilisation is partial: one per cent or a bit more from the entire mobilisation resource.

The frontline is over 1,000-kilometre long itself.

This line is natural and it is necessary to consolidate this territory, to control it, and, above all, this is the purpose the work is carried out for, I mean the partial mobilisation.

Of course, once they are conscripted, they will be trained and requalified. Crews, teams, squads, platoons will be coordinated, and only then they will start fulfilling the assigned tasks.

– Can we mention a certain number of the conscripted reservists?

– Yes, of course, 300,000 reservists will be conscripted. But I would hasten to say that this work will be carried out not instantly, but routinely, as I have already said. It is not supposed to be a 'wide-grabbing harvester' to 'grab' everyone quickly, no.

It happened to be conducted at the same time when we were about to carry out mobilisation trainings.

As you know, we carried out this kind of trainings for two weeks or a bit more for somebody in order to restore skills in driving combat vehicles. It coincided with this event, the announcement of the partial mobilisation. That is why we cancel the scheduled trainings and commence to carry out the partial mobilisation.

– This is a very full and important information, but the operation is in progress. What are its prospects?

– You know there can be particulars or deviations in terms of time and action. But there is also the main assigned task and this task is being fulfilled. Of course, we are doing everything to fulfil it.