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In Photos: Mariupol Under Russian Occupation

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The southern Ukrainian city of Mariupol has been under near-constant Russian bombardment since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. Securing the strategic port on the Sea of Azov would allow Russia to establish a broad "land bridge" connecting the annexed Crimean peninsula with eastern Ukraine's separatist-held Donbas region. But the city's Ukrainian defenders have resisted Russian efforts to capture the city and over 1,000 Ukrainian soldiers are believed to be sheltering in the sprawling Azovstal steel plant. Reporters and eyewitnesses have described harrowing scenes of civilian death and suffering from the all-but-destroyed port city in the months since Russian forces arrived. The UN estimates that thousands of civilians have died in Mariupol since the war began. But while most of the city's pre-war population of 400,000 has fled, some 100,000 civilians are believed to have stayed. Here's a look at photos from areas under Russian and separatist control taken by news agencies on the ground in recent days:



Alexei Alexandrov / AP Photo / TASS

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