

Russia Gaining Upper Hand in Ukraine, Norwegian Intelligence Chief Warns

By [AFP](#)

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The aftermath of a Russian drone attack in Ukraine's Kharkiv region. **State Emergency Service of Ukraine**

Russia is gaining the advantage in the war in Ukraine, owing to its greater number of troops and arms supplied by China, North Korea and other countries, Norway's intelligence service warned on Monday.

Presenting its annual risk report along with other Norwegian security services, the head of the military intelligence unit Nils Andreas Stensones said Kyiv would need "extensive" Western military aid to turn the tide.

"In this war, Russia is currently in a stronger position than it was a year ago and is in the process of gaining the advantage," Stensones told reporters.

He said Russia "could mobilize around three times more troops than Ukraine," that "Moscow

is tackling sanctions better than expected," and its industry can now produce enough munitions, combat vehicles, drones and missiles to enable its troops to "maintain their war effort all year."

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Russia is also receiving military support from North Korea, Iran, Belarus and China, Stensones added, noting that China had not supplied arms but "machines, vehicles, electronics, and spare parts" needed by Moscow's arms industry.

"Extensive Western weapons aid would be needed for Ukrainian forces to be able to defend themselves and regain the initiative in the conflict," Stensones said.

Along with Denmark and the Netherlands, Norway has agreed to provide Ukraine with the F-16 fighter jets Kyiv requested from its allies.

"Norway and Europe must be ready to take more responsibility to ensure their own security and that of their allies," Norwegian Defense Minister Bjorn Arild Gram said.

The United States has been Kyiv's main military donor since Russia's invasion in February 2022, but the U.S. Congress has so far failed to agree on new aid.

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