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A Russian armored personnel carrier was destroyed near the village of Serednie, which was recaptured from the Russian army during Operation Vivaldi in the Donetsk region, Ukraine. RFE/RL/SERHII NUZHNENKO/REUTERS

Ukraine battle tactics meld man and machine

Operation Vivaldi uses tech in new ways to repel Russians

Dan Peleschuk
REUTERS

KHARKIV REGION – Ground robots mounted with machine guns attack Russian positions; small groups of elite troops edge forward under the cover of drones; and electronic jamming in the skies above scrambles enemy signals.

The futuristic scenes played out over the spring and summer on the battlefields of eastern Ukraine, where Kyiv's Operation Vivaldi combined soldiers and machines in potent new ways to push back Russian forces.

The counteroffensive ended in October in a rare battlefield success for Ukraine. While it didn't regain much territory, it thwarted part of Russia's pincer advance on the "fortress belt" of eastern cities that could be critical to the war's outcome.

The operation also showed how, with precise orchestration of highly trained troops and a wide assortment of air and ground technologies, it's possible to penetrate the "kill zone," the drone-infested corridor straddling the frontline that's made any advances extremely costly.

During Vivaldi, Ukraine deployed remotely controlled ground vehicles equipped with high-caliber machine guns, grenade launchers or explosives

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Florida vies for U.S. Space Academy

State pitches campus at Kennedy Space Center

Rick Neale
Florida Today
USA TODAY NETWORK

Several states pitched their vision for a pioneering U.S. Space Academy ahead of the Nov. 16 deadline, per USA TODAY Network reporting and published reports.

President Donald Trump signed an Aug. 28 executive order establishing the future U.S. Space Academy to defend America's national interests in space by preparing "the next generation of astronauts, scientists, engineers, operators, entrepreneurs, civil servants, and warfighters."

Trump's order created a presidential commission chaired by NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman to set up key details within 120 days, including a process to select the academy's location.

Now, federal officials will weigh rivaling applications. Along with Florida, the states vying for the academy may include Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, Ohio, Arizona, Pennsylvania and Nevada, per reports.

Space Florida President and CEO Rob Long said the presidential commission should have a recommendation for Trump by Dec. 26.

He's among the Florida leaders who have proposed a campus to be built on 1,000 acres off the northern end of the former space shuttle landing strip at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. The

See ACADEMY, Page 2A

Trump panel: Israel and Hamas hindering peace

Board of Peace says both sides shirking plan

Alexander Cornwell
REUTERS

JERUSALEM – The body overseeing President Donald Trump's plan to end the Gaza war accused both Israel and Hamas of failing to meet their commitments to end hostilities, leaving the population of Gaza in dire conditions and the ceasefire in danger of collapse.

The 12-page Board of Peace report, seen by Reuters, is the body's second to the United Nations Security Council since the U.S.-backed ceasefire went into effect 13 months ago. It offers a sobering assessment of progress made since then.

The board, established and headed by Trump, is expected to present the report's findings to a meeting of the council in New York at the end of November.

"The distance between what has been agreed and what is happening on the ground nonetheless remains the principal risk to the process," the report said, warning that "a ceasefire that delivers nothing visible cannot be sustained indefinitely."

While the ceasefire has halted major fighting, the wider plan, which calls for Hamas to disarm, Israeli troops to withdraw and reconstruction to begin, has effectively stalled since going into effect last year.

Hamas agreed in July to a Board of Peace road map to surrender its weapons and transfer governance of Gaza to a civilian transitional authority, but Israel rejected the road map, saying it will not withdraw until Hamas is dismantled.

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A Palestinian child displaced by war sits inside a school in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, on Nov. 18. RAMADAN ABED/REUTERS

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