

Ukrainian President's Office Says No Prisoner Swap With Russia Yet

By [Reuters](#)

August 30, 2019



president.gov.ua

Update: The prisoner exchange will not happen Friday and a final date hasn't yet been determined, a spokeswoman for Ukraine's security service (SBU) [told](#) Ukrainian media. She added that the process is going according to plan.

The office of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Friday said no prisoner swap had taken place with Russia yet and the process was ongoing, after an earlier Facebook post by Ukraine's general prosecutor suggested a swap had been completed.

Ukraine is hoping to secure the release of dozens of prisoners, including 24 sailors who were detained by Russia in the Kerch Strait last year, and filmmaker Oleg Sentsov.

Related article: [Jailed Ukrainian Filmmaker Sentsov Moved to Moscow Ahead of Rumored](#)

Exchange, Media Reports

"The process of the prisoner swap is ongoing. Information that it has been completed is untrue," the president's office said in a statement. Interfax also cited a source in Moscow denying that an exchange had taken place.

Ukraine's general prosecutor had earlier reposted a comment on Facebook that the sailors and Sentsov were flying back from Russia after a prisoner swap had been completed.

Russia had transferred Sentsov from a remote Arctic prison to custody in Moscow amid talks with Kiev on a possible prisoner swap, the state-run TASS and Interfax news agencies reported on Thursday.

A Ukrainian court also freed a senior Russian journalist accused of supporting pro-Russian separatists.

Securing a prisoner swap would be a win for Zelenskiy, who became president this year promising to bring an end to the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Ukrainian troops have been battling Russian-backed forces in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine since 2014, in a conflict that has claimed more than 13,000 lives. Sporadic fighting continues despite a ceasefire agreement.

Russia is holding dozens of Ukrainian captives from the conflict. Oleksandr Danylyuk, a top Ukrainian security official, told Ukrainian media he hoped the prisoner swap might happen on Friday, but added:

"We have to wait for the exchange and then comment."

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/08/30/ukrainian-presidents-office-says-no-prisoner-swap-with-russia-yet-a67083>