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Second Ukraine Mayor Abducted by Russian Troops

By AFP

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A Ukraine mayor was abducted by invading Russian forces on Sunday, the second such kidnapping in days. **Twitter.com/DmytroKuleba**

A Ukraine mayor was abducted by invading Russian forces on Sunday, the second such kidnapping in days, bringing strong condemnation from the European Union.

"The army of the Russian Federation captured the mayor of the city of Dniprorudne," in the Zaporizhzhia Oblast region of southeast Ukraine, the regional administration head Oleksandr Starukh said on Facebook.

On Friday the mayor of southern Ukraine's Melitopol was kidnapped by Russian soldiers occupying the city, because "he refused to cooperate with the enemy," according to the Ukraine parliament.

“The EU strongly condemns the kidnapping of the mayors of Melitopol and Dniprorudne by

Russian armed forces," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a post on Twitter.

"It is yet another attack on democratic institutions in Ukraine and an attempt to establish illegitimate alternative government structures in a sovereign country," he added.

European Council President Charles Michel also condemned "in the strongest terms Russia's indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Ukraine as well as Russia's kidnapping of the mayors of Melitopol and Dniprorudne and other Ukrainians. "These kidnappings and other pressure on Ukrainian local authorities constitute another flagrant violation of international law," he added.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called Saturday on the leaders of France and Germany to help secure the release of the mayor of Melitopol.

"During the night and today we are talking to our partners about the situation with our mayor. Our demand is clear: he must be released immediately... I have already phoned [German] Chancellor Olaf Scholz. I have spoken to [French] President Emmanuel Macron... I will speak to all the necessary people to get our people released," Zelensky said in a video released by the Ukrainian presidency.

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> Condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's indiscriminate shelling of civilians in #Ukraine as well as the abduction by Russia of #Melitopol and #Dniprorudnyi mayors and other Ukrainians.
>
> — Charles Michel (@eucopresident) March 13, 2022

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