

Russian Tanks Damaged in Ukraine On Display in Warsaw

By [Nell Saignes for AFP](#)

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A destroyed Russian T-72 tank (L) and a Russian self-propelled cannon 2S-19 howitzer. **Wojtek Radwanski / AFP**

Two Russian armored vehicles, battered, charred and dented, provide a dramatic sight for visitors arriving at Warsaw's historic Castle Square.

The T-72 tank and 2S-19 self-propelled howitzer could almost be mistaken for museum pieces were it not for the mud and grass still stuck to their tracks.

The two vehicles were hit and then captured by the Ukrainian army near Kyiv and the northern city of Kharkiv after Russia invaded in late February.

Now they have been put on a show in the Polish capital as spoils of war, under a joint initiative of the Polish and Ukrainian governments entitled "For Your Freedom and Ours."

The display's message is that Ukrainians are not just defending freedom and democracy in

their own country but for Europe as a whole.

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On a busy summer day in the historic square, pedestrians posed for photos in front of the armored vehicles but others seemed overwhelmed.

Ukrainian citizen Vikka — in town visiting relatives — dabbed her eyes.

"It's hard to see this here. But it bears witness to the support that Poland has shown [Ukraine]," she told AFP.

Warsaw pensioner Krzysztof scrutinized the tanks, his arms crossed.

"We had Russian tanks roll into Poland in 1939," he said.

"They were definitely less modern than these. But otherwise, nothing has changed when it comes to the mentality of the Russian regime."

Eight-year-old Sasha fled Kyiv with his mother Katarina in early March and crossed the border into Poland, among nearly 4.5 million Ukrainians to have done so since the invasion.

"These tanks here show the war is real," Sasha told AFP.

His mother let out a sigh and said: "He knows a lot about the war. He dreams of going back to Kyiv, and of becoming a soldier one day."

The tanks will remain on display in Warsaw over the next few months before traveling to the southern city of Krakow.

The Ukrainian defense ministry plans to then exhibit them elsewhere in Europe, including in Madrid and Lisbon.

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