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Russian Lawmakers Urge West to Condemn Ukraine Over Soldiers' 'Massacre'

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Chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee Andrei Kartapolov (R). **duma.gov.ru**

Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, adopted a resolution Tuesday condemning the alleged killings of captive Russian troops by Ukrainian forces and urging Western counterparts to drop their support for Kyiv.

Russian military and civilian authorities, as well as influential state media figures and bloggers, accused Kyiv of committing war crimes after videos published on social media purported to show the bodies of Russian servicemen who appeared to have been killed after their surrender.

"The footage of the sadistic massacre once again confirmed the Nazi nature of the Kyiv authorities," reads the Duma resolution, using the unbacked assertion that Ukraine's leaders are Nazis invoked by President Vladimir Putin early on in the invasion.

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The lawmakers called on pro-Ukrainian parliamentarians in the West to distance themselves from supporting "the neo-Nazi ideology and its embodiment in modern Ukraine."

Moscow has accused Ukraine's Western allies of turning a blind eye to alleged abuses carried out by the Ukrainian military.

The Duma resolution urges parliamentarians in the rest of the world to "unequivocally condemn" the attack.

A detailed investigation by The New York Times determined that 11 Russian soldiers were shot at close range in the liberated village of Makiivka in eastern Ukraine. The 11th soldier was seen being shot after he fired a weapon at his Ukrainian captors.

Experts interviewed by the outlet said classifying the incident as a war crime comes down to whether the Russian soldiers were shot in self-defense or as an act of revenge.

The actions of the 11th soldier could also be considered a war crime for feigning surrender or non-combatant status, they added.

Russia's presidential Human Rights Council said it plans to ask the international community to respond to and investigate the shooting.

The UN Human Rights Office said it is looking into the videos.

Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets denied that Kyiv's forces had killed Russian prisoners of war, arguing that the Ukrainian soldiers were defending themselves against Russians who feigned surrender.

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