

Russia, Ukraine Swap Hundreds of Prisoners in UAE Brokered Deal

By [AFP](#)

January 04, 2024



Ukrainian soldiers released during Wednesday's prisoner swap. **Ukrainian Presidential Press Service / AFP**

Ukraine and Russia said late Wednesday they had exchanged over two hundred captive soldiers each in what Kyiv has described as the biggest prisoner swap of the war so far.

The two warring sides have carried out dozens of exchanges since Moscow launched its February 2022 invasion, but the swaps have become less frequent and the last took place in August.

Both Russia and Ukraine announced they had received over 200 soldiers each following talks mediated by the United Arab Emirates.

"More than 200 of our soldiers and civilians have been returned from Russian captivity," Zelensky said on the messaging app Telegram, posting a video of uniformed men celebrating.

Embed:

Neither side had announced an exchange in almost five months, prompting Kyiv to accuse Moscow of deliberately blocking deals for political reasons.

"There was a long pause in the exchanges, but there was no pause in the negotiations," Zelensky later said in a message, hailing the swap as "good news".

Russia's Defense Ministry said 248 of its servicemen had been returned and that they were being provided with "medical and psychological assistance."

The UAE said the deal reflected its "strong friendly relations" with both Russia and Ukraine.

Neither side discloses how many prisoners are in their custody.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/01/04/russia-ukraine-swap-hundreds-of-prisoners-in-uae-brokered-deal-a83637>