The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Kadyrov Offers Ukrainian POWs in Exchange for Lifting Sanctions on Family

January 05, 2024



Ramzan Kadyrov. **Yelena Afonina / TASS**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has offered to release Ukrainian prisoners of war in exchange for lifting U.S. sanctions against his family members, Russian state media reported Friday.

Kadyrov said he had provided a list of Ukrainian captives to American writer Scott Ritter, a former U.S. intelligence officer and regular contributor at Russian government-owned media outlets.

Ritter on Friday visited the Chechen capital of Grozny, where he was filmed firing guns at a shooting range and meeting with high-ranking Chechen officials.

"We have prisoners of war who were taken in Donetsk and Luhansk. I'll provide [a list of prisoners] to our guest [Ritter]," Kadyrov was quoted as saying by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

“If [the United States] lifts sanctions from my mother, daughter and those who are not guilty of anything... then we will hand over these people,” he added, referring to Ukrainian prisoners of war currently held in Russia.

Related article: Chechnya's Kadyrov Calls for ‘Blood Vengeance’ Against Relatives of Fugitives

In August, U.S. authorities slapped financial sanctions and a travel ban on Kadyrov’s mother, who was listed as having links to a foundation previously sanctioned by Washington.

RIA Novosti reported that the Chechen leader played Ritter a video, which showed Ukrainian soldiers asking for the United States to lift “absurd” sanctions against Kadyrov’s relatives, his horses and private planes.

Following news of his visit to Grozny, Ritter, a convicted sex offender in the United States, reposted a message on X (formerly Twitter) that praised his “efforts and struggle for a just world” and lauded him as a “true patriot.”

The former U.S. intelligence officer was quoted by Russian state media as saying that “Chechen fighters are famous for bravery and purposefulness.”

“We’re friends and colleagues, it’s a very big honor,” Ritter said.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/01/05/kadyrov-offers-ukrainian-pows-in-exchange-for-lifting-sanctions-on-family-a83648