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Italian City Cancels 'Propaganda' Mariupol Exhibition

By AFP

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Arthur Novosiltsev / Moskva News Agency

Authorities in an Italian city said Tuesday that they would no longer host an exhibition and conference on the "rebirth" of the Russian-occupied city of Mariupol in Ukraine, a decision welcomed by the government in Kyiv.

The Russian cultural association in Emilia-Romagna, a region in northern Italy, had rented the civic hall in Modena for the "Mariupol — Rebirth after the war" event on Jan. 20.

But the municipal council said the event "had taken on characteristics of a demonstration of open support for the invasion war undertaken by Russia against Ukraine."

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Communications from the association were not consistent with a commitment made to

respect the values of the Italian constitution, it added, "in particular to observe the ban on professing and/or practicing fascist and racist ideology."

Oleh Nikolenko, spokesman for Ukraine's foreign ministry, said it had asked Modena to withdraw permission for what he called a "propaganda" exhibition.

"We sincerely welcome this decision. We are grateful to both the city hall and Ukrainians in Italy who did not allow Italian society to be misled about the consequences of Russian crimes in Mariupol and Ukraine," he said.

Mariupol, a port city on the Azov Sea, fell to Russian forces after being virtually razed in a month-long siege in spring 2022, and has since been occupied by the Russian army.

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