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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia, Ukraine Exchange 230 Prisoners of War

By AFP

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ZelenskyyUA / X

Russia and Ukraine announced Saturday they had exchanged 115 prisoners of war each, just over two weeks after Kyiv launched a surprise incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

The exchange came as Kyiv mounted its offensive in Kursk and as Russia eyes more east Ukrainian towns. It also came on Ukrainian Independence Day.

Both countries thanked the United Arab Emirates, who said it mediated the swap deal.

"Another 115 of our defenders have returned home today. These are soldiers of the National Guard, the Armed Forces, the Navy, the State Border Guard Service," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

He published photographs of men wrapped in Ukrainian flags.

Kyiv had said it had taken hundreds of Russian soldiers captive in its Kursk incursion launched on Aug. 6.

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Moscow confirmed the exchange and said it had returned 115 soldiers taken captive in Kursk.

"As a result of a negotiation process, 115 Russian servicemen taken prisoner in the Kursk region have been returned from territories controlled by the Kyiv regime," the Russian Defense Ministry said.

The ministry said the troops were currently in neighboring Belarus, where they are receiving "psychological-medical help" and will be brought to Russia soon.

It released images of the men near buses in a field.

The United Arab Emirates said it had "successfully mediated a new captives exchange between the Russian Federation and the republic of Ukraine."

Kyiv and Moscow have held rounds of prisoner exchanges throughout the more than two-year war.

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