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Russia's Human Rights Chief Urges Against Dehumanizing Ukrainian Soldiers

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Russia's Human Rights Commissioner Tatyana Moskalkova. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

Russia's human rights chief Tatyana Moskalkova said Ukrainian soldiers should not be dehumanized and that Ukraine itself should not be seen as an "empire of evil."

"We shouldn't lose our sense of humanity and see [Ukrainians] only as an empire of evil," Moskalkova told federal lawmakers, according to a video shared by the RTVI broadcaster on Thursday.

She said Russians who had been forcibly taken to Ukraine from the partly occupied Kursk region recounted acts of compassion by their captors upon their return via Belarus.

"They told me different stories, [including] how Ukrainian servicemen shared their last meals with them... and how they rescued [captured Kursk residents] from mercenaries," Moskalkova said.

Moskalkova, who oversees Russian-Ukrainian prisoner exchanges, added that her office is also working to "fight for the souls" of Ukrainian soldiers, emphasizing their shared Orthodox Christian faith with Russians.

Her remarks contrast with the Kremlin's long-standing narrative that Russian forces invaded Ukraine nearly three years ago to fight its so-called "Nazi regime." Her comments also come after Russian investigators accused Ukrainian troops of killing 22 civilians in an occupied village in the Kursk region.

Ukraine has controlled dozens of towns and villages in Russia's Kursk border region since launching a surprise offensive in August. Kyiv says around 2,000 Russian civilians remain in areas its forces occupy.

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