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Ukraine Says It Captured Nearly 1K Russian Soldiers Since Launching Kursk Offensive

By AFP

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Russian soldiers in the Kursk region. **Russian Defence Ministry / TASS**

Ukraine said Thursday that its armed forces had captured nearly 1,000 Russian soldiers in the southwestern Kursk region since it launched a surprise incursion into the border region in August.

"During the operation, Ukrainian forces captured 909 Russian servicemen, significantly replenishing the exchange fund," the Ukrainian military said in a statement, referring to reserves of Russian prisoners of war it hopes to exchange for its own captured soldiers.

"This made it possible to bring home hundreds of Ukrainian defenders who had been held in Russian prisons," it added.

Prisoner exchanges are one of the few ongoing areas of cooperation between Kyiv and

Moscow since the full-scale invasion nearly three years ago. Ukraine has made returning its captured servicemen a key priority.

Since launching its offensive in the Kursk region last year, Ukraine has gradually lost ground to Russian troops as they try to drive Ukrainian forces out of the country.

Kyiv argues that the territory it occupies inside Russia will be an important bargaining chip in any future peace negotiations with the Kremlin, whose forces have been making steady gains across the front line in eastern Ukraine in recent months.

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