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Zelensky Accuses Moscow of Dragging Beijing Into Ukraine War Amid Chinese Recruitment Claims

By AFP

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. **president.gov.ua**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday accused Russia of dragging China into the war and alleged that Beijing knew dozens of its citizens had been recruited to fight for Moscow.

According to Zelensky, Ukrainian intelligence services have identified more than 150 Chinese nationals fighting on the front lines, a day after Kyiv claimed its forces had captured two Chinese citizens in the eastern Donetsk region.

Ukraine is prepared to exchange the captured fighters for Ukrainian prisoners of war held in Russia, Zelensky said.

“Such an overt involvement of Chinese citizens in combat operations on the territory of

Ukraine is a deliberate step towards expanding the war," he told reporters. "This is yet another indication that Moscow simply needs to drag out the fighting."

His comments came hours after Beijing denied claims that large numbers of its citizens had joined Russian forces, urging Chinese nationals to "avoid involvement in armed conflicts."

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"The 'Chinese' issue is serious," Zelensky said. "There are 155 people with names and passport details who are fighting against Ukrainians on the territory of Ukraine."

A document shared with AFP by a senior Ukrainian official listed 168 Chinese citizens allegedly recruited by Russia, according to Ukrainian intelligence.

Zelensky said he believed the true number was "much higher," and that more information was being gathered.

While he did not accuse Beijing of directly sending soldiers, he said Chinese authorities were aware of the recruitment.

"It is clear how they recruit them. One of the schemes is through social media, in particular TikTok and other Chinese social networks, where Russians distribute commercials," Zelensky said. "Beijing is aware of this."

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