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Ukraine Says Russia Returned Nearly 1K Bodies of Fallen Soldiers

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Russia returned the bodies of 909 Ukrainian soldiers killed in combat, Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War said Friday.

The fallen soldiers were said to have died on the front lines in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv and Sumy regions. Some of the bodies had reportedly been held in Russian morgues, the headquarters said.

Russia received the bodies of 34 Russian soldiers in exchange, lower-house State Duma lawmaker Shamsail Saraliyev told the RBC news website later on Friday.

It marks the ninth return of 500 or more bodies since October and came as Russian and Ukrainian officials met in Istanbul for their first direct talks since early 2022.

Kyiv and Moscow have exchanged bodies and prisoners of war since the early months of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky estimates that up to 100,000 Ukrainian troops have been killed in the war. Russia has not updated its official military death toll since the fall of 2022.

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