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Russia and Ukraine Confirm Second Stage of Prisoner Exchange Under Istanbul Deal

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@V_Zelenskiy_official

Russia and Ukraine on Tuesday exchanged a new group of prisoners of war under a deal reached during last week's peace talks in Istanbul, both sides said.

"A second group of Russian military personnel was returned from territory controlled by the Kyiv regime," Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement. "A group of prisoners of war of the Ukrainian armed forces has been returned in exchange."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also confirmed the swap, writing on X: "We continue the return of our people, as agreed in Istanbul... All of them require immediate medical attention. This is an important humanitarian act."

He said the exchange included service members from the Ukrainian Armed Forces, National Guard, State Border Guard Service and State Special Transport Service, and that further

exchanges are planned.

During last week's talks in Istanbul, both sides agreed to release all wounded troops and captured soldiers under the age of 25 — more than 1,000 on each side — and to exchange the bodies of 6,000 fallen soldiers each.

On Monday, Russia's Defense Ministry said the first stage of the exchange involved young soldiers, a claim Zelensky also confirmed in his X post.

Neither side has disclosed the number of soldiers involved in either swap. On Monday, Russia released a video showing at least one tourist bus full of its returning soldiers, though no such footage accompanied Tuesday's announcement.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its troops were receiving medical and psychological care in Belarus before being transferred home for further treatment.

The exchanges come amid mutual accusations over the weekend of violations related to the return of fallen soldiers' bodies.

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