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Russian Military Launches Largest-Ever Air Attack on Ukraine

By AFP

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State Emergency Service of Ukraine

Authorities in Kyiv said Wednesday that the Russian military launched its largest missile and drone attack since the start of the full-scale invasion in February 2022, mainly targeting the western part of the country.

Ukraine's air force said Russia used 728 drones and 13 missiles during the overnight bombardment, adding that its air defense systems intercepted 711 drones and that at least seven missiles were destroyed.

"This is a telling attack — and it comes precisely at a time when so many efforts have been made to achieve peace, to establish a ceasefire, and yet only Russia continues to rebuff them all," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wrote on X.

He called for Ukraine's Western allies to step up sanctions against Russia, specifically

targeting its energy sector, an important revenue stream for the Russian government.

"Our partners know how to apply pressure in a way that will force Russia to think about ending the war, not launching new strikes," Zelensky added.

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The mayor of the western city of Lutsk, Ihor Polishchuk, said fires had broken out at an "enterprise," adding that no one had been reported killed or wounded.

Russia's Defense Ministry later said it launched "long-range" and "precision" strikes on Ukraine overnight Tuesday, targeting military airfield infrastructure. It said "all designated targets were destroyed."

The latest air assault beat a previous Russian record of 550 drones and missiles set earlier this month.

It also came just after the United States reversed its decision to reduce arms shipments to Ukraine.

"It is quite telling that Russia carried out this attack just as the United States publicly announced that it would supply us with weapons," the Ukrainian president's chief of staff Andriy Yermak wrote on social media.

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