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Zelensky Seeks Air Defense Support as Russia Plunges Kyiv Into Cold

By AFP

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State Emergency Service of Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky sought more air defense support from allies on Sunday as hundreds of buildings in Kyiv remained without heating for a second day after Russian strikes.

Russia has hit Ukrainian energy infrastructure throughout the nearly four-year war, but Kyiv says this winter has been the toughest yet, with hundreds of Russian drones and missiles overwhelming air defenses during particularly fierce frosts.

“This week alone, the Russians have launched more than 1,700 attack drones, over 1,380 guided aerial bombs, and 69 missiles of various types,” the president said as he arrived in Vilnius.

“That is why missiles for air defense systems are needed every day, and we continue working

with the United States and Europe to ensure stronger protection of our skies," he added.

Russian bombardments have hit Kyiv particularly hard, forcing half a million people to evacuate.

"There are currently 1,676 high-rise apartment buildings in Kyiv without heating following the enemy's attack on Kyiv city on Jan. 24," said mayor Vitali Klitschko.

Freezing temperatures and repeated airstrikes have slowed efforts by repair crews working to restore heating and electricity.

U.S.-brokered talks with Russia and Ukraine on Washington's plan to end the war finished with no apparent breakthrough on Saturday.

Still, Zelensky said the negotiations were "constructive," and both sides have agreed to meet again in Abu Dhabi next week.

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