

Russia and Ukraine Release 20 Prisoners of War

August 24, 2026



Ukrainian servicemen following their release from Russian captivity on Aug. 24, 2026.
[@V_Zelenskiy_official](#)

Ukraine and Russia exchanged 10 prisoners of war each, officials in Kyiv and Belarusian state media announced Monday, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky calling the swap a “special stage” of ongoing prisoner exchanges with Moscow.

Belarusian state media [reported](#) that Minsk mediated the latest release of servicemen held in captivity. Russia’s Defense Ministry did not immediately confirm the exchange.

On the Ukrainian side, two of the freed soldiers had been previously classified as missing in action since 2024 and eight since 2025, Ukraine’s Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War [said](#).

The group included soldiers and sailors from the Ukrainian armed forces and national guard who had been fighting in eastern Ukraine’s Donetsk region.

“Today, as part of a special stage of the exchange, we are bringing back 10 of our warriors — through Belarus,” Zelensky [wrote](#) on X. “It’s very important that we managed to bring them back.”

It was not immediately clear why Zelensky designated the swap on Monday as “special.”

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The latest release of prisoners came less than a week after Russia and Ukraine each [exchanged](#) 103 servicemen following mediation from the United Arab Emirates.

At the time, Ukraine’s military intelligence chief Oleh Ivashchenko said that another exchange was expected before the end of the month.

Both Russia and Ukraine have released hundreds of prisoners of war since the start of the year through mediation from the United States and the UAE.

Repatriations of fallen soldiers and prisoner-of-war exchanges remain among the few channels of direct communication between Moscow and Kyiv since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in 2022.

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