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Russia returns bodies of 1,000 soldiers to Ukraine – Putin aide

The move follows talks between Washington, Moscow, and Kiev in Abu Dhabi



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Moscow has handed over the bodies of 1,000 fallen soldiers to Ukraine while receiving the remains of 38 of its own troops, Russian presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky has announced.

The development was initially reported on Thursday by State Duma member Shamsail Saraliev, who is part of the parliamentary coordination group on issues related to Russia's

special military operation.

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Medinsky later confirmed the move, saying it was part of humanitarian agreements approved last year during direct Moscow-Kiev negotiations in Istanbul.

Ukraine’s Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War has confirmed that Moscow returned the bodies, without commenting on how many soldiers’ remains Kiev handed over to Russia.

Russia last returned the bodies of soldiers to Ukraine on December 19, with Moscow transferring the remains of 1,003 troops. At the time, Kiev handed over the bodies of 26 Russian troops.

Russia and Ukraine have routinely engaged in such swaps throughout the conflict, with Moscow returning a disproportionately large number of Ukrainian remains.

In early December, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Moscow had returned the remains of more than 11,000 soldiers to Kiev, while receiving 201 bodies. The two sides have also conducted swaps involving prisoners of war.

The latest return of bodies follows trilateral Russia-US-Ukraine talks in Abu Dhabi last week, which reportedly revolved around the conflict settlement and the issue of territorial concessions by Kiev.

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