

Russia Says Returns Bodies of Ukrainian POWs Killed in Plane Crash

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Investigators at the crash site of the Il-76 military transport plane. **Russian Investigative Committee / TASS**

Russia has returned the bodies of Ukrainian prisoners of war who died in a plane crash en route to a prisoner swap, Russia's presidential human rights commissioner [said](#) Monday.

Russia's defense ministry accused Ukraine of firing missiles at the Il-76 transport aircraft in January, killing 65 Ukrainian prisoners of war, three personnel escorting them and six crew members on board.

Ukraine's military has not denied the claims but did not take responsibility for the incident, saying it had no reliable information about who was on board the plane.

Russian human rights commissioner Tatiana Moskalkova told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency that the POWs' bodies had been repatriated.

"I was in attendance," Moskalkova said without disclosing when it took place and how many

soldiers' bodies Russia received in exchange.

Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War [confirmed](#) having received the remains from Russia "recently," but said the bodies were being examined to verify Moskalkova's claims.

"In the recent repatriation measures, the aggressor state handed to Ukraine the remains of the victims, which require additional identification," the headquarters said.

"As part of criminal proceedings, expert institutions are at the moment determining whether the remains of these persons really belong to Ukrainian servicemen," it added in a statement.

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