



Ongoing Surrender “On Far Bigger Scale Than Kyiv Has Acknowledged” At Azovstal

Description

Russia’s defense ministry has now revised the numbers of Ukrainian fighters to have emerged from the besieged Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol upward to more than **1,700 soldiers that have left the plant** . A new Reuters headline has stressed that there’s ongoing “silence from Kyiv” as the surrender is on a much larger than [expected scale](#):

*Moscow said on Thursday that 1,730 Ukrainian fighters had surrendered in Mariupol over three days, including 771 in the past 24 hours, claiming **a surrender on a far bigger scale than Kyiv has acknowledged since ordering its garrison to stand down.***



Red Cross staff in Mariupol on May 18, via AP.

Statements from early in the week by Ukrainian officials, including President Zelensky, attempted to downplay this as “surrender” – avoiding the word altogether and instead stressing the end of the [“combat mission”](#) and that its Azov fighters were “evacuated”.

Russian-backed separatists in control of the area, Denis Pushilin, has recently said many of Azov’s top commanders still remain inside the huge, cavernous steelworks facility.

Reuters [observes](#), “The ultimate outcome of Europe’s bloodiest battle for decades remained publicly unresolved, with no confirmation of the fate of the hundreds of Ukrainian troops who had held out in a vast steelworks at the end of a near three-month siege.”

“Ukraine, which says it aims to secure a prisoner swap, has **declined to say how many were inside the plant or comment on the fate of the rest**, since confirming that just over 250 had surrendered in the initial hours after it ordered them to yield,” the report added.

Defenders of [#Azovstal](#) being taken from the plant to Russian-controlled territory. According to Reuters, seven buses carrying Ukrainian soldiers arrived at a penal colony near occupied Donetsk on May 17.

?Alexei Alexandrov/AP pic.twitter.com/KPE7eZ0zFp

— Anastasiia Lapatina (@lapatina_) [May 18, 2022](#)

Meanwhile, a report from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) suggests that indeed the number of fighters which were held up at the plant for months is likely significantly higher than what

was known. The Red Cross has thus far registered [“hundreds”](#)...

On Tuesday the ICRC started “to register combatants leaving the Azovstal plant, including the wounded, at the request of the parties,” it said in a statement from its headquarters in Geneva.

*“The operation continued Wednesday and was **still ongoing Thursday**,” it added.*

It was previously reported that the wounded are being transported by the Russian military to one of its administered hospitals in the Donbas, some 40km away.

The Red Cross sought to stress that it is a neutral humanitarian organization which will monitor the transfer of the prisoners. “The ICRC is not transporting POWs to the places where they are held,” an official statement said. “The registration process that the ICRC facilitated involves the individual filling out a form with personal details like name, date of birth and closest relative.”

Footage showing Red Cross representative making contact with Ukrainian POWs...

Representatives of the Red Cross have visited the jail in Yelenovka (DPR) where Ukrainian POWs from Azovstal are being held. pic.twitter.com/zLkibFDmys

— Russians With Attitude (@RWApodcast) [May 19, 2022](#)

“This information allows the ICRC to track those who have been captured and help them keep in touch with their families,” it added. “In accordance with the mandate given to the ICRC by States under the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the ICRC must have immediate access to all POWs in all places where they are held.”

by Tyler Durden

Category

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.

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