



## Ukrainian Official Says Kyiv Doesn't Have the Resources for a Counteroffensive

### Description

**UKRAINE:** A senior Ukrainian government official told *The Washington Post* that Kyiv doesn't have the resources to pull off a big counteroffensive in the coming months as Ukraine is lacking skilled troops, munitions, and other equipment.

"If you have more resources, you more actively attack," said the official, who spoke to the *Post* on the condition of anonymity. "If you have fewer resources, you defend more. We're going to defend. That's why if you ask me personally, I don't believe in a big counteroffensive for us. I'd like to believe in it, but I'm looking at the resources and asking, 'With what?' Maybe we'll have some localized breakthroughs."

The official said Ukraine doesn't have "the people or weapons" to pull off a counteroffensive. "And you know the ratio: When you're on the offensive, you lose twice or three times as many people. We can't afford to lose that many people," the official said.

The *Post* also spoke with a Ukrainian battalion commander who went by the name of Kupol and detailed the grim situation on the frontlines. Kupol said his battalion previously withdrew from the town of Soledar, which is near the eastern city of Bakhmut, and came under Russian control in January.

Kupol said of his battalion of 500 troops, 100 were killed, and about 400 were wounded, leading to a complete turnover. He's now being sent soldiers with no combat experience and very little training. "I get 100 new soldiers," Kupol said. "They don't give me any time to prepare them. They say, 'Take them into the battle.' They just drop everything and run. That's it."

"Do you understand why? Because the soldier doesn't shoot. I ask him why, and he says, 'I'm afraid of the sound of the shot,'" he added. The *Post* report said that Ukraine has sent in an influx of draftees to replace more experienced soldiers who have been killed or wounded. It said that as more Ukrainian men who didn't volunteer fear they will get called to battle, Ukraine's security services shut down Telegram accounts that were helping Ukrainians avoid locations where authorities were handing out draft slips.

Kupol said Ukrainian forces are also fighting with very little ammunition. "You're on the front line," he said. "They're coming toward you, and there's nothing to shoot with." *The Kyiv Independent* also

recently spoke with Ukrainian soldiers who said they were fighting without much ammunition, training, and support.

Ukraine is taking heavy losses in its battle defending Bakhmut, but it's keeping a tight lid on its casualty numbers. A German official said including dead and wounded, Ukraine has suffered 120,000 troops, but the number could be much higher.

Despite the dire conditions for the Ukrainian troops, Kyiv is still sending untrained soldiers into what has become known as the "meat grinder" in Bakhmut. Yevgeny Prigozhin, the head of Russia's Wagner Group, said Sunday that Ukraine was "supplying endless reserves" and that fighting was getting fiercer as Russian forces are trying to push through to the western part of the city.

by Dave DeCamp

### **Category**

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

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