



Ukrainian forces withdraw from Avdiivka, for Russians the greatest war success

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Ukrainian troops have left Avdiivka, a key eastern city besieged for months by Russian forces. The decision, made to safeguard the lives of soldiers, marks a significant turning point in the conflict that sees Ukraine opposing the Russian advance.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced the withdrawal, emphasizing the choice as necessary to protect the lives of military personnel on the ground. On the other hand, the Russian Ministry of Defense declared it had taken "full control" of the city, with President Vladimir Putin celebrating this success as an "important victory."

This conquest represents the greatest Russian triumph in recent months and highlights Ukraine's difficulties, exacerbated by the shortage of Western military supplies. Avdiivka, before the conflict, had over 30,000 inhabitants, almost all of whom fled, leaving behind a nearly completely destroyed city.

Ukraine's ammunition shortages have been aggravated by political disputes in the United States, the country's main supplier. American President Joe Biden attributed the withdrawal from Avdiivka to Congress's inaction regarding a crucial foreign aid package, which included funding for Ukraine, forcing troops to ration ammunition.

During a conversation with Zelensky, Biden reiterated the unwavering support of the United States for Ukraine. Meanwhile, speaking at the Munich Security Conference, Zelensky urged Western countries to support Ukraine in the fight against "the monster," referring to Putin, warning that the Russian leader will make the coming years "catastrophic" for many other countries if the Western world does not stand up to him.

Since Putin launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Avdiivka has been the scene of intense fighting. The city has been a battlefield since 2014, when Russian-backed fighters took control of vast territories in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk.

The abandonment of Avdiivka represents the most significant change on the front line over 1,000 km long since Russian troops took control of the nearby city of Bakhmut in May 2023.

Announcing the withdrawal, the head of the armed forces, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, stated he acted to "avoid encirclement and preserve the life and health of military personnel," praising the soldiers for fulfilling their duty with dignity and inflicting significant losses on the enemy.

In a context of enemy numerical superiority and continuous bombardments, the withdrawal from Avdiivka was described as "the only correct solution."

The loss of Avdiivka marks a critical moment for Ukraine in the conflict with Russia, with potential repercussions both on the operational front and on troop morale.

The spokesperson for the United States National Security Council, Admiral John Kirby, raised an alarm about the precarious situation of Ukrainian forces, which are running out of artillery ammunition in the face of Russian assaults, conducted with "wave upon wave of conscript forces." The situation is aggravated by the delay of Congress in approving a supplementary bill, which has prevented the United States from providing the indispensable artillery ammunition requested by Ukraine to counter Russian attacks.

During the week, the United States Senate approved a foreign aid package worth 95 billion dollars, of which 60 billion is destined for Ukraine, after months of political debates. However,

the package is encountering significant obstacles in the House of Representatives, jeopardizing continued support for Ukraine.

Ukraine's critical dependence on arms supplies from the United States and other Western allies is vital to continue the fight against Russia, which has much larger military forces and an abundant stockpile of artillery ammunition. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg warned on Thursday that the failure of the United States to approve continued military support for Ukraine is already negatively affecting battlefield dynamics, highlighting the crucial importance of international support for Ukraine's defensive capabilities.

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