

Local News

# Paramedic in Ukraine says war will stagnate without more Western aid

KUNM | By [Taylor Velazquez](#)  
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Maranie Staab / Global Outreach Doctors

It has now been three months since [Russia invaded Ukraine](#) and a Santa Fe-based charity has people on the ground providing badly needed medical services to people under attack. Aaron Mindel, a paramedic with [Global Outreach Doctors](#) is on the front lines, about 9 miles away from the Russian border in Ukraine where airstrikes have been increasing. He spoke with KUNM by cell phone with air raid sirens in the background.

**AARON MINDEL:** We receive combat casualties at all hours that day and night. Some severe and critical patients that are able to make it to us where they're able to evacuate.

Ofentimes they are held down by enemy fire. And they'll tell us that they have a number of patients coming in. And then we see a lot of shrapnel wounds, gun shot wounds, concussions, contusions, penetrating trauma to the chest, massive hemorrhaging.

The Ukrainian military are excellent and provide incredible care. As the team here at the stabilization point. And from here, we are able to further evacuate them to recovery and rehabilitation to the north and west.

**KUNM:** You are receiving soldiers every day into your care with different amounts of trauma. But what are you hearing from them when it comes to their spirit and morale?

**MINDEL:** The morale of the Ukrainian soldiers we're seeing is something out of this world. I have never seen more brave or courageous group of people. They're fighting for their home, their land, men and women, children's still here. It's incredibly inspiring, humbling, and absolutely heartbreaking to see some of the young men coming in with the injuries that they have, knowing that they're going to be maimed for life.

The whole country is united. And I think they are aware that the; pretty much the entire world is behind them in this fight. At the same time, it is their fight. And they know that no one is coming to help. It's up to them.

Their morale is good. At the same time. They're tired, they've been fighting a while. So it seems like we're expecting another big rush and increased patients. And it's really tough. When we have a lot of patients, Ukraine is not winning, when we don't have a lot of patients, we know we're coming out on top.

**KUNM:** And I know it's probably different for you each and every day. But have you seen an increase of soldiers who are injured? Or have you seen any indicators of Russia significantly pushing back on the Ukrainian soldiers?

**MINDEL:** I'm hearing from some of the walking wounded, that there has been some western military assistance that is more effective than previous assistance. Still, there's not enough and there needs to be more.

More recently, I've heard that there are weapons that has an increased range of roughly 40 kilometers, has been helpful to the Ukrainian military. Whereas the Russian artillery seems to be limited to about 20 to 25 kilometers. Again, you know, there's trench warfare happening out there. And it's bloody and it's gruesome. And they still need assistance.

They're not giving up. It seems that Russia is not necessarily winning, but they're not exactly losing either. So it seems like it's going to be quite a protracted conflict without some change from the West, additional aid.

**KUNM:** And we just spoke about how brave the Ukrainian soldiers are, and really anyone who's on the ground in Ukraine right now. But how are you handling everything that's going on around you?

**MINDEL:** It's an honor to be here, serving in the capacity that I am able to. Alongside some of the most courageous people, the doctors, the nurses, the volunteers, the Ukrainian soldiers. Everyone is really coming together. These are really incredible times.

I'm holding up fine. I have a great team, sense of humor, so I'm finding ways to take care of myself. Sometimes it's just a small cup of coffee, power nap. And I'm very proud to be here. I'm very grateful to be here. I believe in what's happening here. I believe in the Ukrainian people's right to sovereignty, and that this is a very black and white war. And, you know, in the end, the people on the right side of the situation should come out on top

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Taylor is a reporter with our Poverty and Public Health project. She is a lover of books and a proud dog mom. She's been published in Albuquerque The Magazine several times and enjoys writing about politics and travel.  
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