



AS IT IS

## Ukraine Claims it Shot Down Hi-Tech Russian Missile with US System

May 08, 2023

Ukraine said Saturday that it shot down one of Russia's **hypersonic** missiles using an American-made defense system.

Ukrainian military commander Mykola Oleshchuk said his forces downed the Russian missile over Kiev the night of May 4. He said they used the American Patriot missile defense system. He said a Russian aircraft had launched the hypersonic missile from Russian airspace into Ukraine.

Ukraine sent soldiers to the U.S. earlier this year for training on the missile defense system. It is the first time Ukraine is known to have used the defense.

Russia's military says the hypersonic missile can travel 2,000 kilometers and flies 10 times faster than the speed of sound, which makes it hard to shoot down.

The combination of its speed and a heavy **warhead** makes the Kinzhal missile very powerful. It can destroy well-protected targets or mountain tunnels. It could also damage a large part of a city.

The U.S. offered Ukraine access and training for the Patriot system in late 2022, just before a visit from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Ukraine received its first Patriot system in April. The systems came from the U.S., Germany and the Netherlands. It is not clear how many systems Ukraine has or where they are.

Before last week's news, Russia said the U.S. Patriot system was too old to shoot down its fast missiles.

Yurii Inhat is a spokesman for Ukraine's Air Force.

"They were saying that the Patriot is an outdated American weapon, and Russian weapons are the best in the world" he said. "Well, there is confirmation that it effectively works against even a super-hypersonic missile."

Inhat called it "a **slap** in the face for Russia."

Ukraine's military first asked for a Patriot system in August 2021, well before Russia's February 2022 invasion. At that time, the U.S. said it could not send the system.

Ukraine's top military leader is Valerii Zaluznyi. He thanked the U.S. for its aid in a message on the Telegram system over the weekend.

I'm Dan Friedell.

*Dan Friedell adapted this story for Learning English based on a report by the Associated Press.*

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## Words in This Story

**hypersonic** -*adj.* able to travel faster than the speed of sound

**warhead** -*n.* the part of a missile with the explosive device

**slap** -*v.* to hit with an open hand

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