

Putin Holds Talks With Security Chiefs Over 'Deterioration' in Eastern Ukraine

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin (R-L) speaks with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, State Duma speaker Sergei Naryshkin and Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev during a meeting of the Security Council at the Novo-Ogaryovo state residence outside Moscow, Nov. 6, 2014.

KIEV — Russian President Vladimir Putin has held talks with top security chiefs over a "deterioration of the situation" in eastern Ukraine after pro-Russian rebels there accused Kiev of launching a new offensive in violation of a cease-fire.

Sporadic violence has flared since the Sept. 5 truce in a conflict that has cost more than 4,000 lives; but the cease-fire has looked particularly fragile this week with separatists and the central government accusing each other of violations.

Andrei Purgin, deputy prime minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, said Thursday that the Ukrainian army had launched "all-out war" on rebel positions, news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Ukrainian military spokesman Vladyslav Seleznyov denied this, saying the army remained in agreed positions.

"We refute these allegations ... we're strictly fulfilling the Minsk memorandum [on a cease-fire]," he said by telephone.

A Kremlin statement said the presidential Security Council, which groups key security and defense officials under Putin's chairmanship, discussed among other things a "deterioration of the situation in the Donbass due to repeated violations of the cease-fire by the armed forces of Ukraine."

It did not say what decisions, if any, had been reached over the conflict that broke out in the industrialized east after the overthrow of Ukraine's Moscow-backed leader Viktor Yanukovich in February and Russia's subsequent annexation of Crimea.

A witness in the rebel stronghold of Donetsk said there was no sign the conflict was escalating.

Representatives of the separatist regions earlier put out a joint statement calling for a redrafting of the Minsk deal, which established a cease-fire in exchange for Kiev granting "special status" to eastern territories.

Rebels say Ukraine has violated the deal by seeking to revoke a law that would have granted eastern regions autonomy. Kiev says this was a consequence of Sunday's separatist leadership elections, which it says go against the agreement.

The Ukrainian military said three soldiers had been killed Thursday, reporting a total of 26 separate artillery clashes with separatists.

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