

OSCE Mediator Meets With Slovyansk Militants

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The senior European mediator in eastern Ukraine held his first talks on Monday with the leader of pro-Russian separatists in the city of Slovyansk, a flashpoint of the crisis.

Mark Etherington told reporters he met the self-declared, separatist mayor, Vyacheslav Ponomaryov, for two hours. He had asked whether Ponomaryov and his group would comply with last week's Geneva accord under which Russia and Ukraine agreed that militants should disarm and vacate occupied public buildings.

Etherington did not say how the separatist leader responded or give further details. He said he also asked about people who had been detained in Slovyansk, including the previous mayor, about reports of maltreatment of the Roma minority and about a gunfight on Sunday in which at least three men were killed.

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