

Foreign Ministry Says Those Who Don't See Russian Troop Withdrawal 'Blind'

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British Foreign Secretary William Hague speaks during a news conference in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Russia's Foreign Ministry suggested NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen was "blind" after he wrote he had seen no signs Russia is withdrawing troops from Ukraine's border, Itar-Tass reported Thursday.

Rasmussen's statement, posted on his Twitter blog, directly contradicted a statement by President Vladimir Putin made earlier in the day.

"For those with a blind eye we suggest to follow President Putin's statement of May 7," the ministry tweeted in English in response to the Rasmussen post.

NATO, the Pentagon and the White House have all said they have seen no evidence of Russian troops being withdrawn from the border with Ukraine.

British Foreign Minister William Hague also said Thursday there was no sign of Russia withdrawing troops from the Ukrainian border and urged pro-Russian separatists in eastern

Ukraine not to hold a planned independence referendum.

"We haven't seen any evidence of any Russian forces being withdrawn from the areas where they have been stationed in recent weeks. They remain large, near the eastern borders of Ukraine," he told a news conference in Tbilisi, the former Soviet republic's capital.

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