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# German Foreign Minister to Travel to Moscow for First Time Since February

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BERLIN — German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier will travel to Moscow on Tuesday for the first time since the Ukraine crisis erupted in February for talks on the escalating conflict in the former Soviet republic.

Steinmeier's spokesman Martin Schaefer told a government news conference that the minister would spend the morning in Kiev before traveling on to Moscow.

The visit comes amid rising violence in eastern Ukraine and renewed accusations that Russia is sending soldiers and weapons to help separatist rebels, threatening a fragile cease-fire.

"The German government is watching the situation with great concern," said deputy government spokeswoman Christiane Wirtz.

In addition to the Ukraine crisis, Steinmeier's talks in Moscow may also focus on efforts to secure a deal on curbing Iran's nuclear program by a Nov. 24 deadline.

Six world powers — Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the U.S. — are negotiating with Iran in the hope of clinching an agreement that ensures the program is not used for military purposes. Iran says its nuclear work is for civilian needs.

"We are pleased that in these talks there is a constructive, useful exchange with Russia. And we hope that this remains so until the end of the talks," said Schaefer.

He did not rule out pushing the deadline back again, but added: "At the end of the day all participants, first and foremost Tehran, need to explain why delaying the decisions that need to be reached in Tehran will increase the chances of getting a good negotiating result."

"It's clear that if we don't have a solution by Nov. 24 the international pressure from many sides will increase again and it is questionable whether the chances of an agreement will improve."

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