

Ukraine and Russia to Talk Peace in Berlin on Wednesday

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A new round of peace talks on the conflict in eastern Ukraine will be held in Berlin on Wednesday evening with the foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France taking part, a spokeswoman for the Foreign Ministry in Berlin said.

A ministry spokeswoman confirmed a report to appear in the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily. It said that this time Ukraine and Russia had requested the meeting. They are eager to discuss ways to defuse a recent upturn in violence in the region, it said.

After a similar meeting of foreign ministers in Berlin last Monday, the contact group of the four countries called off plans to hold a summit on the conflict because of a lack of progress in implementing the Minsk agreement.

The war between Ukrainian forces and pro-Russian rebels broke out soon after Russia annexed Crimea last year, creating the worst crisis in East-West relations since the Cold War. Western governments accuse Russia of backing the rebels, including by sending in troops, a charge it denies.

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