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Germany Urges Russia to Prevent East Ukraine Elections

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Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel

Plans by Russian-backed separatists to hold local elections in eastern Ukraine are a serious violation of the Minsk peace deal and it is regrettable that Moscow has not distanced itself from the plans, the German government said Monday.

"We view the announcement of the election plans by the leader of the separatists with great concern. These elections pose a serious threat to Minsk," foreign ministry spokeswoman Sawsan Chebli told a news conference. "We expect Moscow to use its influence so that the separatists cancel these elections."

Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert added: "It is regrettable that Russia so far has not distanced itself from these plans."

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