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Leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany to Extend Ukraine Peace Deal

By The Moscow Times

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The leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany have agreed to extend the Minsk peace accord on Ukraine into 2016, the Kremlin said in a statement on Wednesday, following a phone call between the four leaders.

Extension of the agreement was widely expected as a ceasefire has been broadly holding in eastern Ukraine since September, though sporadic clashes have continued between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces and many of the agreement's terms are far from being implemented.

The original terms of the Minsk peace deal, reached in February, were meant to be implemented by the end of 2015, culminating with the restoration of Ukraine's full control over its border with Russia.

The Kremlin statement said that the four leaders had agreed on the need for full observance of a ceasefire, and had also backed more active discussions by the Ukraine Contact Group

aimed at rapid adoption of a law about regional elections in rebel-held areas.

Talks between the four leaders take place regularly as their four countries are the co-signatories of the Minsk peace deal.

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