Moscow Seeks Access to Captured Russian on Ukraine Frontline

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Pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces have been locked in war since 2014. **EPA / TASS**

Russia on Tuesday demanded Ukraine grant access to a Russian citizen who was captured last week on the front line of the conflict between Ukrainian government forces and pro-Moscow separatists.

Russia's Foreign Ministry accused Ukrainian forces of detaining ceasefire observer Andrei Kosyak last Wednesday and failing to inform Moscow via diplomatic channels within an allotted three-day period.

Ukraine says Kosyak was a Russian citizen carrying out an undercover reconnaissance mission for the separatists.

"We call on Ukraine to… stop provocations on the contact line in Donbass, report the location of Russian citizen [Andrei] Kosyak and grant Russian consular staff access to him," spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

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Russian-backed separatists in the Donbass — the breakaway Donetsk and Luhansk regions in southeastern Ukraine — have been locked in a 7-year war with Ukrainian forces that has killed some 13,000 people, according to a United Nations tally.

"We regard Ukraine's actions as treacherous and provocative," Zakharova said in a statement on the Foreign Ministry's website.

Separatist-controlled Luhansk's de-facto leader Leonid Pasechnik had identified Kosyak as the breakaway region's "[officer](#)" who was overseeing the ceasefire during road clearing work when he was captured.

Zakharova urged Europe's main security body, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to give a "principled assessment" of Kosyak's detention.

Protests demanding Kosyak's release temporarily [suspended](#) the OSCE conflict monitoring mission's work in separatist-controlled Horlivka in recent days.

The mission continued after the protesters had left the Horlivka hotel housing its observers, Reuters reported Monday.

Luhansk [responded](#) to Kosyak's capture by withdrawing security guarantees for Ukrainians working along the front line.

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