The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

OSCE Heads Pay First Visit to Moscow Since Ukraine Invasion

By AFP

February 06, 2026



The OSCE's acting head, Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis, attends a joint press conference with the OSCE Secretary General in Vienna on Feb. 6. **Alex Halada / AFP**

Two top Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) officials said Friday they had paid the first visit to Moscow since Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The OSCE's acting head, Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis, and OSCE Secretary General Feridun Hadi Sinirlioglu met Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Thursday and Friday.

"Without dialogue, there is no trust," Cassis told reporters in Vienna in a briefing about their four hours of talks with Lavrov.

Cassis said the goal was to "show the willingness to reach out and to say... we are here to talk to you and to listen to you."

"The willingness to talk together, to listen to each other was here, and I see in this reaching

out a starting point," he added.

Related article: OSCE Official Gets Jail Term for 'Spying' in Russian-Held Ukraine

Cassis and Sinirlioglu also met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv on Monday.

Ukraine, Russia and the United States held trilateral talks in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday and Thursday as part of a Washington-brokered push to end the near four-year war.

Cassis said the OSCE could use its experience and send "a monitoring and verification mission" should a ceasefire be negotiated.

The OSCE said in a statement that Cassis and Sinirlioglu had "stressed the need to end the war in Ukraine" during their talks with Lavrov.

"They underlined the heavy human toll the war continues to take," it added.

The OSCE, a Vienna-based organization born amid the Cold War, is trying to get back into the diplomatic arena after being sidelined by the Kremlin since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

An OSCE monitoring mission to eastern Ukraine in 2014 left the country in haste after Russia launched its invasion there.

Three Ukrainians working under an official OSCE mandate were arrested in April 2022 and then convicted of espionage. They are still being held in Russia or in Russian-controlled territory.

The OSCE, which labeled their arrest "arbitrary," has long been trying to negotiate their release.

"There is some progress and I do hope that we will see some results in the coming weeks. That is something that I will follow very closely in the next days," said Sinirlioglu.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/02/06/osce-heads-pay-first-visit-to-moscow-since-ukraine-invasion-a91886