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Ukraine Govt, Rebels Agree to Create Buffer Zone in East

By Jason Ditz

September 19, 2014



A new deal between Ukraine's government and eastern rebels was reached in Minsk today announcing the creation of a new "buffer zone" in the region in between rebel territory and the government forces.

The 30 km wide zone will see both sides remove fighters and heavy weaponry from the area, aiming to shore up a ceasefire which has held for two weeks.

The deal also makes reference to “foreign mercenaries” having to leave the conflict, which Ukrainian officials say refers to Russian forces, but which Russian forces say refers to foreign fighters on both sides.

With the ceasefire holding, Ukraine’s parliament has granted increased autonomy for the rebel-held east, aiming to end the war completely. Despite this, Ukrainian officials continue to talk up war and press NATO for weapons.