Beat: Miscellaneous

Pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine release last OSCE observers

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USPA News - Pro-Russian insurgents in eastern Ukraine on Saturday afternoon released a second team of observers from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), nearly a full month after the team of four was taken captive, officials said. The organization said the team, comprised of people from Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, and Spain, arrived in the Ukrainian city of Donetsk after their release from their location of captivity in the self-proclaimed Lugansk People`s Republic.

The freed monitors were said to be in good condition. "It is with great relief and happiness that we greet news of the release of our colleagues after a month in captivity," said chief monitor Ertugrul Apakan. "Their families, friends and colleagues are waiting for them. We appreciate the efforts undertaken by all the parties towards their release." The release of the monitors came less than 48 hours after four monitors belonging to another OSCE team were released after they had spent 32 days in captivity. That group arrived safely in the Austrian city of Vienna on late Friday before they boarded an aircraft that flew them to their home countries. Earlier on Saturday, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko announced he had decided to extend a ceasefire with separatists in the east until 10 p.m. local time on Monday. As part of his peace plan, Poroshenko also demanded the release of all hostages, including the remaining four OSCE observers.

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