

Beat: Politics

IT'S THE NON RESPECT OF MINSK II AGREEMENTS THAT LED TO RUSSIAN 22/02/24 ATTACK

SIGNED IN 2014/15 OVER FORMAT NORMANDIE

Paris, Washington DC, 28.02.2025, 20:38 Time

USPA NEWS - What triggered Russia's attack on February 24, 2024, is, according to the Russian administration, the non-compliance with the Minsk II agreements, on which Russia and Ukraine had tried to find a political settlement to the war in Donbass that began in 2014, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been mentioned again since the beginning, and this, from all sides.

However, some points of the Minsk II agreements required that the territories of eastern Ukraine would gain autonomy, this does not seem to have been applied on the Ukrainian side, and provoking the ire of Russia to attack Ukraine in February 2024, for not having respected this treaty of the Minsk Agreements. The Minsk agreements were signed under the auspices of France and Germany in February 2015, in a diplomatic group called "Format Normandie" including Russia, Ukraine at the same table of negotiations and France Germany, for arbitration.

THE MINSK II AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE NORMANDY FORMAT

The Minsk agreements were signed under the auspices of France and Germany in February 2015, after a first attempt - the Minsk protocol in September 2014 - aborted, the Minsk II agreements provided for a "comprehensive political settlement of the crisis" in 13 points, in the words of François Hollande, the French President, back then. Indeed, a memorandum was first signed in September 2014 then a second agreement signed in February 2015, during an acute phase of the fighting. This second agreement unfolds the practical aspect for the implementation of the memorandum. It provides for very concrete actions with a view to a bloc on four major issues in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions

FROM 2014 TO 2022 THE NORMANDY FORMAT MAINTAINED A FRAGILE YET LASTING PEACE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

The Normandy format is the configuration of diplomatic meetings between four countries adopted during the Donbass War, a civil war that pitted the Ukrainian army against the two separatist republics of Donetsk and Lugansk from 2014 to 2022. This configuration thus brings together: Ukraine (where the war is taking place) and the three mediators, Germany, France and Russia.

The first in this series of quadripartite meetings took place in June 2014 at the Château de Benouville (in Normandy), following the commemorations of the Normandy landings, which gave its name to this type of meeting; the last one, although exceptionally between two countries - France and Russia - took place in February 2022, in Moscow, a few days before the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

WHERE DOES THE TERM NORMANDY FORMAT COME FROM

The term "Normandy format" takes its name from a first semi-official conciliation meeting between four countries (France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine) held on 6 June 2014 on the sidelines of the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the Normandy landings¹, at the Château de Benouville, between Caen and Ouistreham, in Calvados, in the Normandy region.

Rahma Sophia Rachdi, an French American journalist, (disabled, wheelchair user) was the first to use the term "Normandy format" to describe this first quadripartite meeting held in Normandy². Until this question at the European Council put by Rahma Rachdi to President François Hollande, the term "Normandy format" had not yet been used to describe this type of meeting. Thus, Rahma Rachdi asks President Hollande whether the "Normandy model" (in English: Normandy Format) is still relevant, and that given "the diplomacy trying to find a solution to the conflict in Ukraine, [if he considered discussing] with Barack Obama in accordance with the conditions established by the European Union? ". Following this question from Rahma Rachdi, Model Normandy, is taken up and

translated into French as "Format Normandie".

The expression is then commonly used to designate the diplomatic conciliation meetings in which the four countries that were present at the Château de Benouville participate. These conciliation meetings are intended to promote dialogue between the Ukrainian state and the separatist republics of Donetsk and Lugansk, with the aim of respecting the Minsk agreements developed in late 2014 and early 2015, the ultimate goal being the peaceful resolution of the civil war in Ukraine.

IN SEPT 2019 PRESIDENT TRUMP SAID HE'D JOINT FORMAT NORMANDIE TALKS ON EAST UKRAINE CONFLICTS

U.S. President Donald Trump, in 2019, during his first term, has said he isn't averse to joining talks with Germany, France, Ukraine, and Russia aimed at ending the conflict in eastern Ukraine. That tells a lot about how Donald Trump was very much determined, back then to end up with this war between Russia and Ukraine.

Known as the Normandy format, Trump told Voice of America on September 9, 2019, in Washington that he'd join the talks if the participants needed him.

"I believe the fact that the exchange of prisoners between Russia and Ukraine took place...is a very big step, and a very positive step. If they need me to join, I would join [the Normandy format]," Trump said. The last round of Normandy talks took place in 10th December, 2019, in Paris, Elysee, French Presidency. The four leaders attended this diplomatic meeting for the last time, as for chancellor Angela Merkel, Presidents Emmanuel Macron, Vladimir Putin, and Volodymyr Zelenskyy). (Source: voice of America)

THE TERMS OF THE THIRTEEN (13) ELEMENTS OF THE MINSK AGREEMENTS NOT RESPECTED

The Normandy Format, this unique diplomatic model bringing together Russia and Ukraine at the same negotiating table with France and Germany as arbitrators, which was born in June 2014, has nevertheless made it possible to maintain a fragile but lasting "peace" for a decade (June 2014 to February 2024), despite armed disputes on both sides of Russia and Ukraine over this area of Donbass.

MINSK AGREEMENTS PROVIDE FOR A HUMANITARIAN COMPONENT, RELEASE OF PRISONERS, SECURITY COMPONENT WITH THE PREREQUISITE OF A CEASEFIRE

The Minsk agreements provide for several components based on the first condition of the ceasefire. A humanitarian component, accompanied by the departure of foreign fighters, and exchanges of departing prisoners and others and humanitarian aid. as well as the security component, in a specific framework regarding the deployment of heavy weapons. This agreement is accompanied by an OSCE mission which must ensure the verification of the application of these measures. With 57 states from Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest regional security organization, providing comprehensive and cooperative security to a region stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. When it comes to the victims of this armed conflict, the 15,000 victims of the Donbass represent the vast majority of people who died before the signing of the Minsk agreements, i.e. before 2014 (UN source)

THE ELECTORAL COMPONENT ONLY PROVIDES FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS IN THE REGIONS CONCERNED

As far as the elections are concerned, the Minsk agreements only provided for Ukraine to regain control of its border in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (controlled in fact by the Russians).

However, the Minsk agreements do not provide for a self-determination referendum, i.e. simply local elections in the two regions concerned.

POLITICAL COMPONENT PROVIDES UKRAINE TO ADOPT AMNESTY ACT

Concerning the political aspect of the Minsk agreements, they contain four main points:

- 1- an amnesty law that Ukraine should adopt, providing for amnesty for anyone who participated in the fighting, except for particularly serious crimes
- 2- a constitutional revision providing for decentralization and taking into account the specificity of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions
- 3- a specific law on the modalities of decentralization for these two regions;
- 4- a law on the organization of local elections in these two regions so that decentralization only benefits legitimately elected local

authorities.

Sources: atlanticouncil, euractiv, uspa24, Voice of america

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-25395/its-the-non-respect-of-minsk-ii-agreements-that-led-to-russian-22-02-24-attack.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSIV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Rahma Sophia RACHDI, Jodie Foster

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