

Ukraine to Deploy More Troops Along Border With Russia

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Ukraine's national security council instructed the Interior and Defense ministries to put its armed forces on full combat alert.

KIEV — The head of Ukraine's security advisory body has said his country will deploy more troops along the border with Russia in a bid to "enhance border security."

Moscow and Kiev are on the brink of conflict following last month's overthrow of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich and subsequent dispute over the fate of Crimea, previously an autonomous republic within Ukraine with a Russian ethnic majority.

Crimea signed a reunification treaty with Moscow on Tuesday following a referendum Sunday in which some 96.7 percent of voters backed joining Russia after 60 years as part of Ukraine.

The head of the National Security and Defense Council, Andriy Parubiy, said Wednesday that the council instructed the Interior and Defense ministries to put Ukrainian armed forces on full combat alert.

He also said his country would introduce visa regime for Russian citizens over the Crimea standoff. Previously, a domestic ID was enough to cross the border.

A source in the Russian Foreign Ministry said Moscow has not yet been officially informed about the introduction of visas.

"Normally, a formal notification is sent to inform about interstate matters of this kind, a decision of an internal structure is not enough. So we will wait," he said.

When asked about possible introduction of visas for Ukrainians as a retaliatory measure, the diplomat said that any decisions will be made only after Moscow is formally informed about the move via diplomatic channels.

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