

# Yanukovych Urges Referendums in Every Ukrainian Region

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Deposed Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych on Friday called on Ukrainians to hold referendums in each of the country's regions to determine their status.

Yanukovych said that holding referendums is the only way "to stabilize the political situation and to maintain the sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine," Itar-Tass reported.

"As a president who stands by you with all my thoughts and soul, I urge every sensible citizen of Ukraine: Do not give in to imposters! Demand a referendum on the status of each region within Ukraine," he said in an address.

Yanukovych fled Ukraine last month after signing an EU mediated agreement between his administration and opposition leaders on Feb. 21. His whereabouts became a source of speculation for several days before he eventually turned up in the southern Russian city of Rostov for a news conference.

He has said that he won't run in the May 25 presidential election, which he has described as illegitimate. Yanukovych maintains that he is the rightful leader of Ukraine, and that the government in Kiev came to power as a result of an unconstitutional coup.

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