

Foreign Ministry Asks Kiev to Halt Military Preparations, Warns of 'Civil War'

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The Foreign Ministry has called on Kiev to stop massing military forces it said were tasked with suppressing anti-government protests in southeastern Ukraine.

"We call for an immediate halt to military preparations which could lead to an outbreak of civil war," the ministry said Tuesday in an online statement.

Pro-Russian protesters seized official buildings in the eastern cities of Kharkiv, Luhansk and Donetsk on Sunday night, demanding that referendums be held on whether to join Russia similar to the one that preceded Moscow's takeover of Crimea.

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