

# Pro-Russian Separatists in Donetsk Begin Organizing May 11 Referendum

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Pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk have started forming an electoral commission for a planned May 11 referendum on the secession of their eastern Ukrainian region and the possibility of joining Russia, a lawmaker said.

A deputy from the Donetsk regional legislature, Iryna Popova, said that the separatists who had occupied local government buildings plan to advance two questions at the referendum, Interfax reported.

"The first will supposedly ask: 'Do you agree with creating an independent Donetsk republic?' And the second will ask: 'Which state should the Donetsk republic be part of – Ukraine or Russia?'" Popova said.

Donetsk's official administration said in a statement that its representatives met on Wednesday with envoys from the separatist "People's Republic of Donetsk" to try and negotiate an end to the violence between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian protesters, which has left at least one person dead and two dozen injured.

Separatists have presented their primary demand to the regional administration — that the referendum should go ahead, the statement said.

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