

Ukrainian Pro-Russian Separatist Mayor Says Region Needs Russian Troops

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The rebel mayor of the pro-Russian separatist Ukrainian city of Slovyansk said Monday that his eastern region needed Russian troops to provide stability and peace.

Vyacheslav Ponomaryov, speaking the day after an unofficial referendum that rebels say mustered 80 percent support for self-rule, described Ukrainian troops as occupiers.

"They should go ... We are going to defend our territory," he said in his sandbagged administrative building in Slovyansk, the most heavily defended rebel city in the east.

Asked whether the self-declared "Donetsk People's Republic" needed Russian military help, he replied: "I support this. We need Russian troops to provide stability and a peaceful life in the region's future."

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