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Duma Speaker Naryshkin Calls for New Cease-Fire in East Ukraine

July 01, 2014



Sergei Naryshkin, the speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament.

The speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament called Tuesday for a new cease-fire in east Ukraine, hours after Kiev ordered a resumption of a military campaign to end a pro-Russian separatist rebellion.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko opted not to extend a cease-fire that had been intended to allow for peace talks with the rebels, saying the separatists had failed to keep to the truce or follow a peace plan he had outlined.

Sergei Naryshkin, chairman of the State Duma lower house and an ally of President Vladimir Putin, criticized Poroshenko's decision in comments to Russian reporters.

"We think that without a truce, without the start of dialogue, it is simply impossible to restore peace, justice and law and order in Ukraine," Naryshkin was quoted as saying by Interfax.

The Kremlin has yet to respond to the end of the cease-fire.

Moscow could face more penalties from the European Union on top of existing asset freezes and visa bans unless pro-Russian rebels act to end the conflict. Moscow denies accusations that it is orchestrating the rebels in east Ukraine.

Another senior parliamentarian, Sergei Mironov, urged Russia to take full control of the border between Russia and the two rebellious regions of Luhansk and Donetsk in east Ukraine.

Mironov, who heads the Just Russia party which has backed Putin throughout the Ukraine crisis, was quoted by RIA news agency as saying this would help establish a humanitarian corridor for refugees wanting to flee the fighting.

Naryshkin accused Ukraine's Western allies of turning a blind eye to what he called human rights abuses and a flood of refugees fleeing Ukraine.

"It is the theater of the absurd," Naryshkin was quoted as saying. He added that representatives of various Western countries were acting strangely, "as if they don't notice what is happening in Ukraine, as if the crisis and civil war are not happening in the center of Europe."

See also:

Poroshenko Ends Cease-Fire, Promises to Attack Rebels in East Ukraine

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