The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Donetsk Separatists Open 'Consulate' in the Czech Republic

September 02, 2016



The red, black, and blue tricolor of the Russian-backed separatists in Ukraine's Donetsk region flutters defiantly in the unlikeliest of places – Ostrava, a city in the Czech Republic's east. The flag marks the location of the self-declared Donetsk People's Republic's self-declared European "consulate," RFE/RL reports.

The Czech Foreign Ministry swore to close the center on September 1. In addition, Jaromir Stetina, a member of the European Parliament, said that the center makes a mockery of Czech diplomacy.

The center's far-right organizer claims that the purpose of the consulate is to build ties between Ostrava and Donetsk, former sister cities with an industrial heritage.

"We want to aid and coordinate communication between the citizens of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Czech Republic," said Nela Liskoya, a prominent figure in the xenophobic National Militia group.

Liskoya said that she is repulsed by the Czech Republic's support for the “junta” in Kiev, echoing pro-Kremlin propagandists who claim that the Ukranian government is illegitimate.

Natalya Nikonorova, “foreign minister” of the Donetsk People's Republic, said that the center marks a “historical moment” for the would-be state. However, EU recognition is extremely unlikely. Brussels continues to sanction key separatist figures, including Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the self-proclaimed leader of the DPR.

The separatists have fought Kiev's armed forces in a brutal war that has killed more than 9,500 people since april 2014.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/09/02/donetsk-separatists-open-a-consulate-in-the-czech-republic-a55203