

Russian Lawmakers to Urge Putin to Recognize Breakaway Ukraine Regions

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Alexander Kravchenko / TASS

Russian lawmakers will on Tuesday [adopt](#) resolutions calling on President Vladimir Putin to formally recognize the separatist-held regions of eastern Ukraine as independent states.

Russia's Communist Party had submitted the draft resolution last month calling on Putin to formally recognize the self-proclaimed Luhansk and Donetsk republics. Experts have described Russian recognition of the Donbas as a possible prelude to an annexation of the region.

A parliamentary committee adopted two versions of the resolution Monday.

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One addresses Putin directly and the other — reportedly submitted by the pro-Kremlin United Russia party — seeks consultations with Russia's Defense and Foreign Ministries before his

approval.

Both documents will be considered at Tuesday's lower-house State Duma session.

The Russian lawmakers' considerations come as Ukraine and its Western allies accuse Russia of preparing a potential invasion of its ex-Soviet neighbor, with more than 100,000 troops on the Ukrainian border.

Observers say Russia — which has issued over half a million fast-tracked Russian passports to Donbas residents as of mid-2021 — could justify an incursion into eastern Ukraine by saying it seeks to defend the newly minted local population of Russian citizens.

Last month, United Russia [urged](#) Putin to deliver military supplies to the Donetsk and Luhansk republics for the first time to defend against alleged aggression from Kyiv.

The Kremlin rejects claims that it is planning to invade Ukraine, instead blaming the West for increasing tensions with military deployments and support for Ukraine and demanding sweeping security guarantees from the U.S. and NATO.

Western countries have also accused Russia of backing the eastern Ukraine rebels with weapons and other forms of support since 2014.

To date, the Kremlin has denied the presence of Russian troops in eastern Ukraine in an official capacity.

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