

# *Russian Foreign Minister Says Moscow Ready for Dialog with Ukraine*

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Moscow, May 26 (RHC)-- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has expressed Moscow's readiness to have dialog with Ukraine's newly-elected president, Petro Poroshenko. The top Russian diplomat, however, warned Kiev that pursuing its military operations against pro-Moscow protesters in the country's eastern regions was a "colossal mistake."

Ukraine's president-elect Poroshenko has said that he is planning to meet Russian leaders in the first half of June. He has also promised to restore ties with Moscow in a bid to bring back stability to crisis-stricken Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the pro-Western billionaire has stated that he will keep the current Ukrainian interim government and the acting Prime Minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Poroshenko has pledged to put an end to the war and bring peace to the former Soviet state. The 48-year-old chocolate tycoon has also ruled out negotiations with pro-Russian activists, vowing to continue military operations in the country's southeastern provinces.

Ukraine's presidential election was held on Sunday. With ballots from about 40 percent of precincts counted, Poroshenko has so far received 54.06 percent of the votes.

The election came after months of political crisis, which erupted last November when the former president, Viktor Yanukovich, refrained from signing an association agreement with the EU in favor of closer ties with Russia. The refusal triggered months of unrest, which finally led to the ouster of Yanukovich on February 23rd, who then left the country for Russia.

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