

Crimea Lawmakers Adopt Motion to Join Russia



Kiev, March 6 (RHC)-- Lawmakers of Ukraine's autonomous Crimea region have requested Russia to let the region join the Russian Federation amid escalating tension over the territory.

The 100-member Crimean Supreme Council unanimously voted on Thursday in favor of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to join Russia and become part of its neighboring country. Crimean Parliament announced that if Russia responded to the request positively, then Crimean citizens could give their view in a referendum on March 16th.

According to ITAR-TASS news agency, Crimean citizens would answer two questions on the ballots. "The first one: Are you in favor of Crimea becoming a constituent territory of the Russian Federation? And the second: Are you in favor of restoring Crimea's 1992 constitution?"

Under current Ukrainian law, the Crimean parliament enjoys a degree of autonomy. It voted 78-0 with eight abstentions in favor of holding the referendum and joining Russia. The Russian government has refrained from commenting on the matter and simply said President Vladimir Putin has been informed of the Crimea parliament's request.

In a related development, an opinion poll carried out in Russia over the weekend, shows that most Russians express commitment towards the people of Crimea, and believe the Kremlin should make greater efforts to defend the interests of ethnic Russians in that region.

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