

# *Observers from 21 Countries to Oversee Crimea Referendum*

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Simferopol, March 15 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Foreigners from 21 countries will be present during Sunday's referendum as international observers, said the chief of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea commission on preparing and holding the All-Crimean referendum.

At Friday's briefing, Mikhail Malyshev said these observers, who came from, among other nations, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain and the United States, have been registered to oversee the referendum.

The commission chief told reporters that some 1.52 million Crimeans are eligible to vote during the referendum, of which the first provisional result would come out on Monday, and the ballot papers have already been distributed to 27 sub-commissions on the peninsula.

Voters will have two options: to unite with Russia or remain in Ukraine with increased autonomy.

The Crimean parliament on Tuesday adopted a declaration of independence from Ukraine, which specifies that Crimea will become independent if around 2 million residents vote in favor of joining Russia in the referendum.

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