

UN Secretary General Visits Ukraine to Discuss Crimea Crisis



United Nations, March 21st (RHC) The UN Secretary-General is visiting Ukraine on Friday as part of his diplomatic efforts to help resolve the crisis.

Ban Ki-moon is scheduled to meet with Acting President Oleksandr Turchynov and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in the Ukrainian capital Kiev.

On Sunday the Ukrainian autonomous region of Crimea held a referendum on secession from Ukraine to join the Russian Federation, a move which was widely condemned by the international community.

Before going to Ukraine, The UN Secretary-General was in Moscow where he met with President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Ban Ki Moon told reporters that he had "a very productive and constructive" meeting with President Putin.

"During our meeting, I have emphasized that all parties refrain from any hasty or provocative actions that could further exacerbate an already very tense and very volatile situation. Inflammatory rhetoric can lead to further tensions and possible miscalculations, as well as dangerous counter-reactions."

Ban Ki Moon said "intimidation by radical elements" had to be prevented at all costs" adding that he "was profoundly concerned by the recent incident where Ukrainian military bases were taken over."

The Secretary-General stressed the need to employ every possible diplomatic tool to solve the crisis which, he said, has grave political and economic ramifications. He assured he would continue to fulfil his duty as Secretary-General to engage with all relevant parties.

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