

# *White House Website Petition Demands U.S. Accept Crimea Referendum*

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Moscow, April 1 (RHC), -- A petition to US authorities was published on the White House's website on Tuesday, demanding they acknowledge as legal the expression of the will of the Crimean people, who voted for reunification with Russia last month, Russian news agency RIA-Novosti reports.

"Citizens of Crimea made their choice on March 16, having voted for the Autonomous Republic of Crimea becoming a part of the Russian Federation. Such was the choice of the people, not the politics. We demand that the Obama administration immediately accept this decision," the petition reads.

Authors of the petition likewise demanded a condemnation of February's illegal armed coup in Ukraine, and called for an effort to bring the leaders of the coup to trial for crimes against humanity.

According to the White House's guidelines, officials must respond to the petition if it gathers at least 100,000 signatures by April 21. So far more than 600 people have signed the petition.

On February 22, a regime change resembling a military coup took place in Ukraine. The Ukrainian parliament ousted President Victor Yanukovich, changed the constitution and announced early presidential

elections for May 25. Several southeastern regions, including Crimea, refused to recognize the legitimacy of the new government, instead calling for referendums to determine their own future.

A referendum on the status of Crimea was held on March 16, with more than 96 percent of citizens voting for reunification with Russia. On March 18, Crimea and Moscow signed an agreement of reunification, allowing the republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to enter into the Russian Federation.

The US and EU called the referendum illegitimate and imposed targeted sanctions against senior Russian officials. Moscow considered such a reaction a "double standard" as the West continues to support the illegitimate government in Kiev.

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