



Crisis in Ukraine: Daily Briefing

8 May 2014, 5:00 PM Kyiv time

1. Kremlin-backed "separatism" in Eastern Ukraine

The active phase of the anti-terrorist operation in Eastern Ukraine continues. The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reports that they stopped a bank transfer from a commercial structure of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation to a company in Donetsk. The bank transfer was for approximately 3 million USD; the SBU stated that the "funds were to be used for ensuring unlawful actions of terrorist groups on the territory of Ukraine and sabotage actions during the celebrations of Victory Day." The head of the SBU stated that the service is doing everything possible to avoid provocations during Victory Day events on 9 May, and has established additional operational-investigative groups for this purpose. The SBU reported that in Mykolaiv they arrested two persons, leaders of the pro-Russian radical organization "Mykolaiv resistance," who were planning to organize explosions during the laying of flowers at the Grave of the Unknown Soldier and the Glory to Heroes memorials. The SBU stated that the two men "organized and coordinated separatist actions of local pro-Russian radicals and also ensured the cooperation with the special services of the Russian Federation to destabilize the socio-political situation in Mykolaiv oblast." According to reports the body of a man, V. Salo, a farmer from Shandryholove village, Donetsk oblast, was found in Kharkiv oblast. According to media reports, witnesses saw him kidnapped by unidentified men. His wife stated that the V. Salo was being harassed previously because of his position against the separatist referendum. The barricades surrounding the Mariupol city council were lit on fire, and the building was reportedly freed of the "separatists" who were occupying it.

2. Putin - "Referenda" should be postponed

In a meeting with OSCE chairman D. Burkhalter on 7 May, Russian President V. Putin stated that the "referenda" scheduled to be held on May 11 by Kremlin-backed "separatists" in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts should be postponed. He also stated that Russia has pulled back its troops from the Ukraine border. US State Dept. spokesperson J. Psaki said on May 7 that the US has not seen any evidence of the withdrawal of Russian troops from the border.

3. "Separatists" state "referenda" will go ahead

The leaders of the Kremlin-backed "separatists" in Donetsk and Luhansk, who are organizing illegal and illegitimate "referenda" on May 11 on the establishment of "independent" republics in the two oblasts, will go ahead with the "referenda." Leaders of "separatist" groups in both oblasts issued statements saying they intend to go forward with the "referenda" on 11 May.