
Putin and Poroshenko to Discuss Ukrainian Crisis

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"It's clear as daylight that the disastrous situation in the eastern areas of Ukraine and especially in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions cannot be left unattended," said a Putin spokesperson.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko are due to meet at Minsk on Tuesday.

Also joining the trilateral meeting will be the EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, Vice-President Gunther Oettinger who is responsible for energy, and Commissioner for Trade Karel de Gucht will represent the EU at the Customs Union-Ukraine Summit.

The meeting is expected to cover the security and political situation in east Ukraine, and continue the discussions around the EU-Ukraine Association agreement according to an EU statement.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Monday said that, "I hope very much our Western colleagues... won't just come with expectations we will somehow magically solve things for them. That will not work."

But he also added, "All the participants are unanimous in thinking that a political dialogue must be launched."

Poroshenko said he would demand Putin rein in the pro-Russian separatists, and warned Moscow that he had "a strong country, a strong army", and he called "for the (rebel) fighters to be withdrawn from Ukraine."

"We are capable of defending our sovereignty, our independence and our territorial integrity. Today we are fighting for the independence of Ukraine. Together we will win for sure," he added.

It is also expected that Putin and Poroshenko will meet in separate talks, which would be the first since June in

Normandy in which the discussion did not even get started.

Dmitry Peskov, a spokesperson for Putin said that, "During this meeting, if it happens, we expect to have a frank conversation on the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis and humanitarian situation."

He added that, "It is difficult to expect the presidents to discuss all questions on the agenda."

One of the additional topics of discussion is the gas pipeline. Putin stated that, "This sphere contains a very strong energy aspect," when asked in a press conference.

The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel also said that, "I firmly believe that there can only be a political resolution, which the EU and Germany want and can facilitate. There will be no military end to this conflict, so negotiations are absolutely necessary," as reported in RIA Novosti.
