

## **Ukraine Military Plans Blockade of Donetsk, Luhansk**

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The counter-terrorism forces intend to mount a blockade of the cities of Luhansk and Donetsk to force the terrorists to lay down their arms, Mikhailo Koval, deputy secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council said on Inter TV.

"These population centres [Luhansk and Donetsk] will be subjected to a complete blockade and accompanying measures which will lead to these people – separatists and gangsters – being forced to lay down their arms," Koval said.

Koval noted that the counter-terrorism forces were acting according to the president's strategic plan, which envisages steps to force terrorists to lay down their arms.

Zoryan Shkiryak, an advisor to the interior minister, told reporters in Izyum that the counter-terrorism forces intend to create humanitarian corridors to allow civilians to leave Luhansk. He said transit corridors and points have been decided on, and the State Service for Emergency Situations will now start opening the corridors.

"Everyone who wishes to leave, to be evacuated, will know how to do so within a week, or a week-and-a-half at the most," he said.

He said the creation of similar corridors out of Donetsk lay directly within the remit of the general staff and leadership of the counter-terrorism operation.

"If evacuation arises as an issue for the city of Donetsk, I think this will be done according to the plans that have already been made," he said.

Shkiryak expressed confidence that this would not be necessary as Donetsk and Luhansk would be liberated in the near future.

On July 5, President Petro Poroshenko approved orders to Ukraine's military and security forces to continue liberating the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

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