

# Social Network Group Calls for Volunteers to Join Pro-Russian 'Resistance' in Ukraine

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March 05, 2014

**The**  **Moscow Times**

Russian nationalists have taken to social networks to ask military-age men to help in "the battle for Ukraine" by traveling across the border as tourists and joining "resistance" groups in Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine.

"We need men aged 18-45 who are in Ukraine or are ready to go," said a page on the VKontakte social network, titled "Civil Self-Defense of Ukraine" and followed by a smaller headline: "Tanks toward Kiev."

The page invited readers to make a "contribution to the battle for Ukraine" by enlisting as volunteers and traveling to the "main centers of resistance" in the Russian-speaking eastern city of Donetsk and the central city of Kharkiv, or to the southern sea port of Odessa.

The announcement did not specify what the "resistance" would constitute, but instructed

potential volunteers to be "sharp and collected, remember that people are busy, and there is no need for extra questions."

"Remember — you are an ordinary tourist, do not take anything extraneous with you," the announcement added.

By Wednesday morning the page, which was created ten days ago, had more than 7,600 followers.

The page did not specify which organizations it might represent, but provided a hyperlink to another VKontakte page, run by the Eurasian Union of Youth — a group that had been enlisting young men in the southern Russian region of Rostov to go as "volunteers" to Ukraine, Novaya Gazeta reported.

Eurasian Union chief Vladimir Prokopenko said that about three dozen local men had responded to his website's call for volunteers within a few days, "but many of them say they can bring along another 500."

Russia's Internet monitoring agency said this week that it has blocked 13 VKontakte pages that were linked to Ukraine protesters who toppled the country's Moscow-backed government.

Roskomnadzor said in a statement that the groups were supporting "Ukrainian nationalist groups" and supporting "terrorist activity."

No shutdowns of Russian Web pages calling for organizing "resistance" were reported.

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