

Gorbachev: Ukraine Should Sign Neutrality Into Constitution

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Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has stated in an interview that Ukraine should become a neutral state and should enshrine its neutrality in its constitution.

The comments were made during an interview with the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper, which was published Thursday.

When asked for his opinion on ending the conflict in Ukraine, Gorbachev stated that the fulfillment of the Minsk agreements was the key to peace in the short-term, before saying: “But further on? I am certain a democratic and unaligned Ukraine is in the interests of the Ukrainian people.”

Gorbachev said that Ukraine’s status outside of any international blocs should be enshrined in Ukraine’s constitution and guaranteed through international treaties, giving the example of the 1955 Austrian State Treaty as a template for a similar agreement for Ukraine.

The treaty, signed by the Soviet Union, the U.S., Britain and France, guaranteed the neutrality

of Austria and the non-occupation of its territory by foreign powers.

Gorbachev also implied that the “Crimean question” was an issue solely concerning Ukraine and Russia.

“That is not an issue that needs to be discussed with the West,” he said.

Former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was overthrown in [February 2014](#), an event which was followed by Russia’s [annexation of Crimea](#) in March. These events precipitated a protracted armed struggle in the east of the country between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian government forces. The Minsk cease-fire agreements signed last year have failed to bring an end to the conflict which has claimed almost 10,000 lives.

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