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# Medvedev Signs Decree Creating Contractor for Kerch Strait Bridge Project

By The Moscow Times

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The view over the Kerch Strait from Cape Fonar on the eastern shore of Crimea.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Monday ordered state-road building corporation Avtodor, or Russian Highways, to create a subsidiary company that will oversee the building of a bridge across the Kerch Strait, connecting Crimea with Russia's Krasnodar region.

In December 2013, Russia and Ukraine signed a series of bilateral agreements, one of which was dedicated to the construction of the bridge, and despite the collapse of working-relations between Moscow and Kiev over the current crisis in Ukraine, Medvedev expects the deals to be honored.

Medvedev said that the creation of a reliable and cheap transport link between Crimea and the Taman Peninsula in the Krasnodar region was in the interests of both countries in terms

of developing trade and joint investment projects.

"Ukraine has always been and will remain an important trade and economic partner to us, and the government should work on these issues," Medvedev said during a meeting with his deputies, according to the government's website. "We are following the developments closely."

In February, First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov ordered the Transportation Ministry to begin negotiations with Ukraine on starting construction work and commissioned Avtodor to conduct a feasibility study.

Negotiations about the bridge are long-running and date back to 2004 when they were halted due to political reasons. They got back under way again in 2010.

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