

Ukraine Blasts Russia Over Crimea Annexation

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The Ukrainian parliament has refused to recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea following an agreement between the breakaway region's authorities and President Vladimir Putin.

The agreement and speech by the Russian president "has nothing to do with law, or with democracy or with common sense," Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman Evhen Perebynis wrote on the ministry's Twitter account Tuesday.

On Tuesday afternoon Putin gave a lengthy speech in which he said Russia has the right to defend Russian speakers in former Soviet republics. He then signed a treaty on annexation with Crimean Prime Minister Sergei Aksyonov, Crimean Parliament Speaker Volodymyr Konstantinov and Sevastopol Mayor Alexei Chaly. More than 96 percent of Crimeans that took part in Sunday's referendum voted for the region to become part of Russia.

Many Western countries and the interim government in Kiev, which took over following the removal of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych last month, have denounced the referendum as illegitimate.

Ukrainian Justice Minister Pavel Petrenko said that his country could make up for the loss of Crimea by nationalizing Russia property in accordance with international law, Lenta.ru reported, citing Ukrainian news outlet LigaBusinessInform.

When asked which assets could be nationalized, Petrenko reportedly said that Gazprom has "a lot of assets in on European territory."

Crimea's deputy prime minister, Rustam Temirgaliyev, previously said that Ukrainian state-owned property on the peninsula, such as gas company Chernomorneftegaz, would be nationalized by the region, now part of Russia.

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