

Russia Abolishes Black Sea Fleet Agreements With Ukraine

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The State Duma voted unanimously on Monday to abolish a number of agreements between Russia and Ukraine over the Russian Black Sea fleet's presence in Crimea.

The bill, submitted by President Vladimir Putin on Friday, was supported by 443 deputies, with no one voting against it.

Under the new law, Russia has scrapped three bilateral agreements relating to the fleet's status and the conditions of its stay in Crimea signed in 1997.

A 2010 deal to extend the fleet's stay by 25 years in exchange for gas discounts given to Ukraine has also been canceled.

Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, where the Black Sea fleet is based, became part of Russia earlier this month following a referendum on the subject, that the Ukrainian government and Western leaders widely condemned as a violation of previously signed international treaties.

The Kremlin said earlier this month that there were no grounds for the Black Sea fleet deals to be honored since the territories had become part of Russia.

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