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Ukraine Aims to Retrieve Crimea Through International Court

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The Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, which is the seat of the International Court of Justice.

Ukraine is planning to file a lawsuit against Russia at the International Court of Justice over the annexation of Crimea, the country's foreign minister said.

"We consider Crimea part of Ukraine, we are planning to file lawsuits in international courts against Russia and against Russia's actions in Crimea," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Deshchytsia said at a press conference following a meeting with NATO in Brussels, RIA Novosti reported Tuesday.

"We believe that with international support, we will be able to get Crimea back to Ukraine," Deshchytsia said.

The foreign minister said that the lawsuit would be filed at the Hague-based International Court of Justice, the United Nation's main judicial body, though he did not specify when it would be submitted.

"We are gathering documents now, it may take some time," Deshchytsia said.

Justice Minister Pavlo Petrenko said Ukraine also planned additional legal action to demand compensation from Russia for scrapping a slew of agreements on the Russian Black Sea fleet's presence in Crimea, Ukrainian news agency UNIAN reported.

The State Duma voted on Monday to approve President Vladimir Putin's bill to abolish three bilateral agreements with Ukraine on the Black Sea fleet's status and the conditions of its stay in Sevastopol in light of the recent annexation of Crimea.

Ukraine will continue to recognize the agreements, Petrenko said, adding that it would demand that Moscow continue providing price discounts for natural gas supplies in exchange for renting the Sevastopol naval base.

Western governments and Ukraine refuse to recognize the Crimea referendum that paved the road for the annexation of the peninsula last month. A UN General Assembly resolution denouncing the referendum as illegal was adopted with an overwhelming 100-11 vote last week.

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