

Russia Tests UN Stance on Crimea With Nuclear Reactors' Inspection

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's delegation to the United Nations has invited the UN's atomic watchdog to inspect two nuclear facilities it controls on the Crimean Peninsula, forcing the issue of how the previously Ukrainian facilities should be evaluated, news agency TASS reported Tuesday.

"Russia has taken full responsibility for nuclear sites in the country's new territorial entities," Alexander Pankin, Russia's deputy representative to the UN, said at a special session devoted to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Crimea's nuclear reactors are small research and training reactors operated by the Sevastopol University of Nuclear Energy and Industry, according to a database on the IAEA's website.

Pankin said Russia is ready to give the IAEA an opportunity "to hold a full-format inspection that nuclear material used at these facilities has not been taken from them ... if the agency is interested."

The international legal and regulatory status of these reactors was called into question following Russia's annexation of Crimea in March. A UN resolution at the time called upon all nations and international organizations to refrain from taking actions that would recognize Crimea as anything but Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine at the time urged the IAEA not to take any action that might tacitly recognize Russia's seizure of the region, such as responding to the invitation Russia has just issued.

The IAEA database of research reactors so far continues to list both of the Crimean facilities as located in Ukraine.

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