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Putin Establishes New 'Polite People' Day in Russia

February 27, 2015



Special Operations Forces Day will be celebrated on Feb. 27. **Stanislav Belousov**

February 27 will from now on be marked in Russia as Special Operations Forces Day, according to a decree signed Thursday by President Vladimir Putin and published on the official legislative website.

The Special Operations Forces, a branch of Russian defense apparatus operating both inside the country and abroad, was formed in March 2013. The Chief of the General Staff said at the time of its creation that the new branch was inspired by the experience of "the world's leading nations," Russian media reported.

Answering its own question of why Feb. 27 was chosen as the day, an article in government newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta said: "Remember what happened and where a year ago. And how it all ended."

One year ago, mysterious troops bearing no insignia appeared in Crimea, which was shortly afterward annexed from Ukraine by Russia. The troops, who said little and declined to reveal

their identity but ensured order during the annexation and subsequent referendum on joining Russia, quickly became known as "little green men" in the international media and "polite people" in Russia.

Putin initially denied that Russian troops had been dispatched to Crimea, but later admitted it.

In September 2014 State Duma deputy Igor Zotov called for the celebration of Polite People Day on October 7 — Putin's birthday.

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