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# Russia Erecting Monument to 'Little Green Men' Who Took Over Crimea

By The Moscow Times

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The scenic coastline of the Crimea region

A monument to the unmarked Russian special operations forces who occupied Crimea ahead of its annexation from Ukraine is being erected in Russia's Far East as part of celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, Russian media reported.

The mysterious troops with no insignia who appeared in February 2014 in the then-Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea and ensured order during the referendum and subsequent annexation became known as "little green men" in the international media and "polite people" in Russia.

The monument to the troops will comprise a 180-centimeter-tall iron statue of a masked soldier holding a kitten, and will be unveiled in the Amur region city of Belogorsk on May 6, the Interfax news agency reported.

The city's administration said the idea for the monument came as Russia celebrated the first

anniversary of the country's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in March.

"We want the memory of those who helped Crimea return home to live on forever," the head of Belogorsk's administration, Stanislav Melyukov, said in comments carried by Interfax.

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

Earlier this year, Putin declared Feb. 27 — the anniversary of the appearance of the "little green men" in Crimea — Special Operations Forces Day.

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