

Russia Reaffirms Right to Deploy Nukes to Crimea

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian military vessels are seen during a rehearsal for the Victory Day parade in Sevastopol, Crimea.

Russia has the right to deploy nuclear weapons to Crimea, the Foreign Ministry's arms-control chief, Mikhail Ulyanov, said in an interview with news agency RIA Novosti published Monday.

“Russia certainly has the right to deploy, if necessary, nuclear weapons anywhere on its national territory, including the Crimean Peninsula,” Ulyanov was quoted as saying in response to comments made by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin at a NATO meeting earlier this month.

Klimkin said the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons to the disputed territory of Crimea, which Russia annexed in March last year, would be a violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT is an international agreement which prohibits states defined as non-nuclear

from attaining nuclear weapons.

Russia and Ukraine have been trading rhetorical shots over this issue for months. Crimea is still recognized by the United Nations as Ukrainian territory — a non-nuclear state according to the NPT — but Russia has claimed the peninsula as part of its sovereign territory.

Under the NPT, Russia is one of five nuclear states, alongside the U.S., Britain, France and China, allowed to field nuclear weapons anywhere in its territory.

Though it has not yet deployed nuclear warheads to Crimea, the Defense Ministry earlier announced plans to relocate 10 Tu-22M3 nuclear-capable bombers to the peninsula, RIA reported.

The bombers will be outfitted with conventional, rather than nuclear cruise missiles, according to RIA.

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