

Ukraine to Sit Alongside Russia on UN Security Council

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UNITED NATIONS — Ukraine won a seat on the UN Security Council on Thursday, giving it a global platform to wage its political battle against Russia for annexing Crimea and supporting Ukrainian separatists.

Four other countries — Egypt, Japan, Senegal and Uruguay — were also elected to the UN's most powerful body. All five countries were unopposed in their bids for the non-permanent seats and will start their two-year terms on Jan. 1.

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Ukraine's Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin called it a very important day for Ukraine and the United Nations "because Ukraine is fighting against Russian aggression." He said the country was proud of the "world solidarity."

Klimkin was in New York this week meeting with UN ambassadors and letting the world know that relations with Russia will be anything but conciliatory.

"Election to the Security Council is of special importance for us as a backdrop of the ongoing Russian aggression," Klimkin told reporters on Tuesday. "For the first time, we have an absolutely unique and unimaginable situation ... that a permanent member of the Security Council is an aggressor in Ukraine, waging a hybrid war against Ukraine."

Russia had quietly campaigned against Ukraine's bid, according to diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity because discussions have been private.

But Ukraine easily won approval from the required two-thirds of the 193 UN member states that voted Thursday.

Senegal was the top vote-getter with 187 votes, followed by Uruguay with 185, Japan with 184, Egypt with 179, and Ukraine with 177.

There could also be clashes between Japan and rival China, another permanent member, as well as with Russia. Japan has territorial disputes with both countries.

Egypt will replace Jordan as the representative of Arab nations on the council.

The government of army chief-turned-president Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has been criticized by human rights groups for its crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, other Islamists and protesters.

Although its seat was uncontested, Egypt campaigned heavily, inviting ambassadors to visit the country over the summer and hosting a gala dinner Tuesday night for about 500 people, including all UN ambassadors and their spouses. It was held at the Temple of Dendur in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a gift to the United States from the Egyptian government in 1965.

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