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# Crimean Tatar Parliament Branded Terrorist Organization by Crimean Supreme Court

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Crimean Tatars chant slogans as they rally in Simferopol, Crimea.

The Supreme Court of Crimea has labeled the Crimean Tatar parliament as a terrorist organization, state-owned outlet RIA Novosti reported Tuesday.

The organization, called the Medzhlis, was banned from operating within Russia by the court.

Crimean Prosecutor Natalia Poklonskaya said in her submission to the court that the organization was built "exclusively on anti-Russian sentiment." Medzhlis leaders Rafat Chubarov and Mustafa Dzhemilev were "simply puppets in the hands of Western masters using Crimean Tatars as pawns," she wrote.

The prosecutor also claimed that the pair are known associates of active terrorist organizations.

Chubarov and Dzhemilev fled to Ukraine after the annexation of Crimea and have since been

involved in blockades against the peninsula. Both have been banned from entering Russia for five years on charges of inciting of ethnic hatred, RIA Novosti reported.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby had previously urged Russia to halt court proceedings against the Medzhlis. In response, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declared the case one “of Russia's internal affairs.”

An official appeal by the Medzhlis will be made over the next month.

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