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EU Forcing Term 'Crimea Annexation' on Member States - Russian Foreign Minister

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Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov **Christian Charisius / AP**

New strict instructions from the EU are forcing European nations to refer to Crimea as an "annexed" peninsula, Russia's Foreign Minister has claimed.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that governments had been ordered to use terms such as "Crimean annexation" or "occupation of the Donbass," the TASS news agency reported Monday.

"I don't think I'm revealing any big secret when I say that the European Union has written instructions which tell member states – including countries which are candidates for EU membership – how they should describe Russia," Lavrov said at a meeting in the Serbian capital of Belgrade.

"All of these countries are forced to use set phrases such as the 'annexation of Crimea,' or

the ‘occupation of the Donbass.’ It’s like a mantra,” he claimed.

Lavrov also praised countries which “defied” the EU, claiming that member states recognized the absurdity of the current situation.

"There is no longer blind obedience," he said.

Lavrov’s words follow a resolution passed by the European Parliament in November, which condemned Russia's state media as “disinformation and propaganda” designed to “increase Russia's influence and weaken the EU.”

President Vladimir Putin praised Russian state media in the wake of the ruling, claiming that Europe wished to silence “alternative viewpoints.”

"We are observing a certain, quite obvious, degradation of how democracy is understood in Western society," Putin said.

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