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Ukraine Border Patrol Threatens to Detain All Ships Sailing Out of Crimea

April 04, 2018



Sergei Malgavko / TASS

Ukraine's border patrol service has threatened to detain all ships sailing in and out of the annexed Crimean peninsula a week after detaining a Russian-flagged vessel and taking its captain into custody.

Russia accused Ukrainian border guards of hijacking the Crimean fishing vessel on March 25 after Kiev charged its crew of 10 with illegally crossing the border. Russia's seizure of the peninsula from Ukraine in 2014 was met with Western sanctions and Kiev continues to label Crimea temporarily occupied territory.

Related article: Russia Accuses Ukraine of Hijacking Crimean Fishing Vessel in 'Violation of International Law'

"Law enforcement bodies will react immediately to violations of entry and exit patterns from

and into the occupied territory," Oleg Slobodyan, Ukraine's border guard spokesman, said in an interview with Ukraine's Obozrevatel website Wednesday.

Days after being charged with illegal border crossing by Ukrainian prosecutors, the Russian vessel's captain, Vladimir Gorbenko, was reportedly taken to a court in the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson.

"Very serious charges could be brought against the defendant, it's yet unclear which," Gorbenko's lawyer Dmitry Shcherbin told the state-run TASS news agency.

The Ukrainian border control said in an online statement later that it was providing the necessary provisions to the vessel's crew, including food, medicine and access to lawyers.

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