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UN Passes Resolution Criticizing Crimea Militarization, Russia Expresses Regret

December 18, 2018

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Russia said it regretted a newly passed United Nations resolution criticizing its militarization of "temporarily occupied" Crimea.

The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on Monday voicing "grave concern over the progressive militarization of Crimea" and calling on Russia to "end its temporary occupation of Ukraine's territory," Ukraine's Mission to the UN reported. In a 66-19 vote, the resolution submitted by Ukraine condemned Moscow's building of a bridge connecting mainland Russia to the annexed peninsula and called for the release of Ukrainian sailors and warships seized in November.

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"We regret the latest vote," Russia's Deputy UN Ambassador Dmitry Polyansky said after the

resolution was adopted.

“The Kiev regime thus receives new signals that it’s allowed everything and all will be forgiven, while Russia will be unconditionally blamed in advance for all its sins and crimes,” he said.

Polyansky said it was “heartening” that 72 nations abstained from the vote, but criticized the “bloc discipline” of the 66 countries that backed the Crimean resolution, many of which were NATO and EU member-states.

Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and has since deployed advanced weaponry on the Black Sea peninsula. The international community has not recognized the annexation, which the Kremlin calls Crimea’s “reunification” with Russia, while Western nations responded to the move with a series of economic sanctions.

The UN General Assembly approved a resolution in December 2017 calling the Russian authorities in Crimea “occupation forces” and noting that the application of Russian law was illegal there.

General Assembly resolutions are non-binding but can carry political weight.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/12/18/un-passes-resolution-criticizing-crimea-militarization-russia-expresses-regret-a63870