

Russia Denies It Stole Toilets From Returned Ukrainian Ships

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Sergei Gumenyuk / EPA / TASS

Russia did not remove equipment including toilets from three Ukrainian naval vessels before returning them this week, the Federal Security Service (FSB) said Thursday.

The chief of Ukraine's navy [said](#) Russia "took off lamps, power outlets and toilets" from the two small armored artillery vessels and a tugboat that it had [held](#) for a year. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has reportedly [said](#) that he will demand that Russia return the missing equipment.

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"If Ukraine managed to ruin the vessels and their bathroom equipment as they crossed the coast of Crimea to Ochakiv, that's Ukraine's problem," the FSB was [quoted](#) by Interfax as saying.

The FSB published video of the Yanu Kapu tugboat and the Berdyansk and Nikopol artillery boats it [said](#) it filmed during the handover. The video showed an intact toilet in one of the vessels.

Russia opened fire and wounded several Ukrainian sailors when it seized the ships in waters separating mainland Russia from Crimea called the Kerch Strait in November 2018. Moscow said the vessels had illegally entered Russia's territorial waters, while Kiev denied breaching Russian borders.

Russia returned the sailors who had been on board the ships to Ukraine in September in a prisoner exchange.

The release of the ships took place ahead of a four-way peace summit on the eastern Ukraine conflict set for Dec. 9 in Paris.

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