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Ukraine's Kherson to Become 'Part of Russia,' Occupation Official Claims

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Andrei Turchak and Vladimir Saldo (L-R). **Denis Pushilin's Telegram channel**

The Russian-appointed head of Ukraine's Kherson region said Thursday that the area will "soon become part" of the Russian Federation.

De-facto governor Volodymyr Saldo was installed by Russian forces after they took control of the southern Ukrainian region in early March.

"We are looking at the Russian Federation as our own country because it is under the control of the [Russian] Armed Forces and later will be transformed into a federal subject," he wrote on the official Telegram channel for the region's Russian-appointed military-civilian administration.

"We will become the Kherson region of the Russian Federation."

Russian officials, however, have not confirmed that annexation of the occupied regions of southern Ukraine is imminent.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said earlier this month that whether or not Russia annexes the region depends on "the will" of local people.

With a population of approximately 300,000 residents, the port city of Kherson was captured by Russian forces soon after the country's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

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