

Russia Creates Ministry for Crimean Affairs



Moscow, March 31 (RHC-RIA Novosti) – Russia's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Monday Russia would launch a new ministry specially for the newly-absorbed regions of Crimea and Sevastopol.

"I believe it is feasible to form a separate federal body with the executive branch of the government in dealing with the issues of Crimea and Sevastopol," Medvedev said at a top level government meeting in Simferopol, capital of Crimea.

Medvedev was the first Russian leader to visit Crimea since the Black Sea peninsula became part of Russia on March 18th.

He listed energy independence of the peninsula from Ukraine and upgrading of local tourism infrastructure as the most urgent tasks in these two regions.

"Development of the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol has become our state priority. The task will require significant efforts," Medvedev said, adding President Vladimir Putin had signed two decrees on formation of the Ministry for the Crimean Affairs.

The Russian leader also demanded Russian law enforcement agencies be established in the peninsula as soon as possible "to provide law and order, and counter aggressive nationalists and extremists actions."

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