

Detained Ukrainian Journalists Released in Crimea

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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KIEV — Three journalists detained by pro-Russian forces in Ukraine's Crimea peninsula, now under the control of the Russian military, were released on Tuesday, Ukrainian police sources said.

The three women journalists were detained on the peninsula by members of Russian Unity, a political party which favours the union of Crimea with Russia, Interior Minister Arsen Avakov had earlier said on his Facebook page.

The Ukrainian police sources said Interior Ministry officials had been in contact with the journalists' driver and they were now safe and in a Ukrainian district outside Crimea.

The three journalists — Kateryna Butko, Alexandra Ryazantseva and Olena Maksymenko — were detained at a checkpoint manned by Russian Unity and later taken to the port city of Sevastopol, ministry sources said. Also freed was their driver and a photographer.

The journalists were the subject of a statement by the Paris-based watchdog Reporters Without Borders on Tuesday that also expressed alarm at what it described as a "steady escalation in violations of journalists' rights in Crimea."

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