

Russian Humanitarian Aid to Crimea Stolen, Official Says

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June 10, 2014



By the end of April, donors from across 20 Russian regions had contributed more than 1,800 tons of humanitarian goods to Crimea.

The bulk of the humanitarian aid given by Russian donors to Crimea has been stolen, the republic's acting head Sergei Aksyonov said Tuesday during a regional cabinet meeting.

"I want to tell the folks who put their hands on humanitarian aid at this tough time for our republic that they will go to court and any officials responsible for this will be dismissed," Aksyonov told the cabinet.

By the end of April, donors from across 20 Russian regions had contributed more than 1,800 tons of humanitarian goods to Crimea, official representative of Emergency Situation Ministry Alexander Drobyshevsky said, as quoted by RBC Tuesday. The goods consisted largely of medical and energy equipment.

Drobyshevsky could not provide any updated figures on the volume of supplies, but told The Moscow Times on Tuesday that "not a single nail was stolen while we were transporting it."

Crimea's commission on humanitarian aid was charged with distributing the donated goods among the relevant regional ministries. In the course of frequent inspections, the local law enforcement agencies found that some of the donated goods appeared to have been put up for sale, Aksyonov's spokesperson Yekaterina Polonchuk told The Moscow Times by telephone from Crimea.

"The situation with medical equipment and medications was particularly difficult," Polonchuk said.

In addition to the sale of goods, Aksyonov claimed that doctors in Crimean hospitals were seen by law enforcement officers seeking payment for services that should have been provided free of charge.

"This is a completely unacceptable situation," Aksyonov told the ministers. "The problems we had before joining the Russian Federation have not yet been resolved."

The republic's health minister, Pyotr Mikhalevskiy, filed a letter of resignation after the cabinet meeting. The recently-established local branch of Russia's Interior Ministry had launched eight criminal cases for "misappropriation or embezzlement," which is punishable by up to six years in prison.

Polonchuk could not comment on the identities of the suspects in the case.

See also:

[Crimea's Parched Fields Fall Victim to Russia-Ukraine Clash](#)

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Original url:

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