

# Crimean Man Accused of Terrorism Appeals to European Court Over 'Forced' Russian Citizenship

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After the Crimean Peninsula was annexed from Ukraine by Russia in March last year, the Kremlin said Ukrainian nationals living there would be considered Russian.

A Moscow court ruled that a Crimean man arrested on suspicion of terrorism will remain in detention in Moscow through May 16, days after he filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights claiming that he was illegally forced to give up Ukrainian citizenship and become Russian, the BBC's Russian-language service reported Thursday.

After the Crimean Peninsula was annexed from Ukraine by Russia in March last year, the Kremlin said Ukrainian nationals living there would be considered Russian, and gave those who wished to retain their Ukrainian citizenship one month to declare their intent to do so.

Alexander Kolchenko was detained in May last year and is accused of helping to burn down an office of the ruling United Russia party in the Crimean city of Simferopol a month earlier,

accusations he denies.

He was given Russian citizenship in October, and in January this year, a court in Simferopol rejected his request to keep his Ukrainian citizenship, saying he had not filed the paperwork on time, the BBC reported.

Kolchenko's complaint to the European court, according to Vedomosti, cites Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to respect for private life, family life, home and correspondence.

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