
Putin Orders Completion of Kerch Strait Bridge by 2018

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Putin told the press that he has high hopes that construction deadlines will be respected, and stressed that this “strategic bridge” should be finished by the end of 2018.

Putin, who recently visited the Crimean Peninsula, noted that the Crimean seaports will be fully operational until such time as a road connects the two territories.

The bridge across the Kerch Strait was supposed to have been built by Russia and Ukraine as part of a joint project agreed upon in November 2010, but the overthrow of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych in February 2014 and the subsequent annexation of Crimea in March halted those plans.

Russia thus decided to undertake the project on its own, with an estimated total cost of 250 billion rubles (\$3.7 million).

The Kerch Strait, known as the gateway to the Azov Sea, is 41 kilometers (25.4 miles) long and has a width of 4.5 kilometers (2.5 miles).