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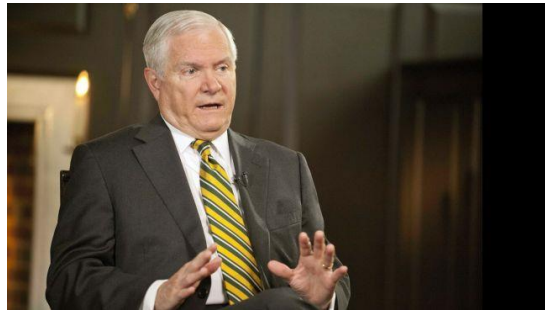
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<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/03/09/353997/robert-gates-crimea-is-gone/>

## Robert Gates: Crimea is gone

3/9/2014



**Former US secretary of defense Robert Gates believes that Ukrainian strategic peninsula of Crimea is gone and Russia will ultimately take control of it.**

"I do not believe that Crimea will slip out of Russia's hand," said Gates while appearing on Fox News Sunday.

When host Chris Wallace asked him again that "You think Crimea's gone?" Gates replied: "I do."

Gates also predicted that the Russian president will do his best to even take control of the rest of Ukraine.

"I don't think he will stop in Ukraine until there is essentially a pro-Russian government in Ukraine, in Kiev," he added.

He made the remarks as the local administration of Crimea region has called for a referendum on March 16 in order to decide whether the autonomous region should join Russia or not.

Gates who served as secretary of defense from 2006 to 2011 under both former president George W. Bush and President Obama called on his fellow Republicans not to criticize Obama over the crisis in Ukraine.

Many Republicans say Obama has taken a "weak" stance and is behaving "naively" in addressing the situation in Ukraine. They believe the Obama administration has stopped short of considering "military options" with regard to the crisis.

"There really aren't any direct military options" for the United States over the situation in Ukraine, Gates said.

"Putin invaded Georgia when George W. Bush was president. Nobody ever accused George W. Bush of being weak or unwilling to use military force," said Gates.