
Moscow vows to retaliate against latest US sanctions

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"Having imposed new sanctions against Russian citizens and companies, the US has once again demonstrated that it has opted for aggravating confrontation," the ministry said in a [statement](#) Friday.

"Continuing to cite the situation in Ukraine, Washington continues to expand the anti-Russia sanction campaign instead of pushing Kiev towards the implementation of Minsk agreements."

Moscow stressed that such "*provocations*" do not just harm Russia-US relations but also hamper cooperation on resolving other global issues.

"Of course, such a move would not be left without our reaction," the statement said.

On Thursday, the US imposed further sanctions against Russia over the events in eastern Ukraine and Crimea, targeting 11 more people and 15 more companies. Among the newly included companies were affiliates of Russian oil giant Rosneft and several organizations linked to one of the country's major banks, Vnesheconombank.

Among the sanctioned people are associates of a billionaire Russian gas trader, Crimean port operators and former Ukrainian officials.

The US Embassy in Russia said that Washington regards the new sanctions not as an escalation of tensions between the countries, but rather as a step "*to ensure that previously imposed sanctions retain their effectiveness.*"

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Moscow does not rule out an asymmetrical response to US new sanctions against a number of against a number of Russian physical and legal persons, the Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Friday.

"We can't exclude any asymmetric actions. However, this is not our goal," he said. "Our attitude towards US sanctions is well known: we consider these sanctions illegal, against international laws and damaging bilateral relations. What's most important, the US side takes these steps without any apparent reasoning, without pursuing any particular aim."

Though the new round of sanctions came a day after Russia vetoed the UN Security Council resolution on an MH17 tribunal, the US State Department denied any links between the two events.

"No specific date or anniversary," said the US State Department spokesman Mark Toner answering a question asked by RT's Gayane Chichakyan at the press briefing on Thursday. "No, it's just a way to strengthen existing sanctions; it's unrelated to any other thing."

On Wednesday, Russia vetoed a draft of a UNSC resolution calling for an international tribunal on the crash of the Malaysia Airlines MH17 flight over eastern Ukraine last July.

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