

Beat: Politics

EU EXTENDS VALIDITY OF SANCTIONS OVER ACTIONS AGAINST INTEGRITY OF UKRAINIA

RESTRICTIVE SANCTIONS OF MORE 6 MONTHS

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USPA NEWS - The Council prolonged by 6 months the application of EU restrictive measures targeting actions against Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. The asset freeze and travel bans against 149 persons and 37 entities have been extended until 15 March 2016.

The assessment of the situation did not justify a change in the regime of sanctions nor in the list of persons and entities under restrictive measures. One deceased person was removed from the list. The legal acts are available in the EU Official Journal of 15 September 2015. Official Statement European Council-----

CONTEXT:

The European Council on 18 December 2014 congratulated Ukraine on its new government and welcomed its determination to carry out political and economic reforms. The Union's policy of not recognising the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol was further tightened (see annex).

The EU called on Russia to fully assume its responsibility following renewed intensification, in spite of the ceasefire in place, of shooting and shelling in eastern Ukraine, which led to further tragic deaths of civilians notably on 13 and 22 January 2015, again underlining the need for strict observation of the Minsk agreements.

The EU warned of a further grave deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia following the shelling of residential areas of Mariupol from separatist-held territory on 24 January 2015, which cost the lives of at least fifteen civilians, wounding many others and terrorising the innocent population. This comes after a series of indiscriminate attacks in the Donbas, accompanied by announcements of further offensives by Russia-backed separatists, who refused to observe the ceasefire. HR/VP Mogherini spoke by telephone with Ukrainian President Poroshenko the same day and called openly upon Russia to use its considerable influence over separatist leaders and to stop any form of military, political or financial support.

The High Representative convened an extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council to discuss Ukraine on 29 January 2015. Condemning the recent escalation of violence and calling on Russia to exert its influence, the Council agreed to extend existing restrictive measures over action against Ukraine's territorial integrity, until September 2015, and asked that the Commission and EEAS undertake preparatory work on any appropriate action aiming at ensuring a swift and comprehensive implementation of the Minsk agreements. HR/VP Federica Mogherini said: "We hope this can help putting pressure, in particular on Russia, to make positive steps and prevent negative steps that we have seen in recent days."Source eeas.europa, europeanconsilium

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