

The EU Parliament's Anti-Russian Resolution Is Dangerous

Cutting Russia off from SWIFT?

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Russia is a major world power, and if the EU can attempt to bully it in such a dangerous way, then there's nothing stopping the bloc from doing the same to comparatively weaker countries.

The European Parliament (EP) [passed](#) a [resolution](#) on Thursday threatening very serious consequences against Russia if it carries out an “invasion” of Ukraine. These include immediately stopping oil and gas imports from the country and cutting it off from the SWIFT payment system, as well as freezing the assets of so-called “oligarchs” and their families on top of canceling their visas. The text also condemns alleged Russian intelligence operations in Europe, including disinformation operations and the latest claims that its agents were behind the [2014 munitions blast in Czechia](#). They also want to stop Nord Stream II.

The EP also supports meddling in Russia's internal affairs. Examples of this include criticism of the country's recent jailing of anti-corruption blogger [Alexei Navalny](#) due to his parole violations and the authorities' decision to investigate whether his organization is extremist. The resolution expresses support for unsanctioned rallies in Russia too while criticizing the authorities' response to them. One of the most disturbing proposals put forth is to seriously consider the UK's proposal for a “Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regime”, which could predictably be exploited for political purposes considering the tense relations with Russia.

The EP's resolution is therefore very dangerous because it shows that ideologically driven anti-Russian political forces in Europe are serious about imposing extreme costs on Moscow solely for warning that it [might defend](#) its legitimate border interests and those of its citizens in Eastern Ukraine in the event that Kiev launches a military operation there. Cutting Russia off from the SWIFT payment system might be akin to an [unofficial declaration of war](#) considering the country's international financial dependence on it. In addition, it's counterproductive to stop importing Russian oil and gas when no viable alternatives exist at the moment.

Russia, like all countries, has an obligation to enforce its laws. Navalny's jailing was done in accordance with existing legislation on this issue, as is its breaking up of unsanctioned rallies and temporary detainment of their participants. As a case in point, some EU countries

have also detained participants of unsanctioned rallies that were organized against their COVID-19 lockdowns in recent months, especially whenever they clash with police. Furthermore, France is currently investigating various organizations as extremist ones, just like Russia is doing too. The basis of Brussels' proposed meddling in Moscow's internal affairs is therefore hypocritical.

The rest of the world is rightly concerned after this resolution was just passed. Russia is a major world power, and if the EU can attempt to bully it in such a dangerous way, then there's nothing stopping the bloc from doing the same to comparatively weaker countries. In addition, similar resolutions might one day be tabled against China too on a similar basis as well. Basically, nobody would be safe if the EU succeeds in cutting Russia off from SWIFT and so openly meddling in its internal affairs by criticizing its law enforcement agencies and their work. That's why this resolution is so dangerous to world peace.

COVID-19 is still sweeping across the world, and the extended effect of lockdown has been disastrous for the EU member states' economies, not to mention the psychological health of their citizens. There are much more urgent tasks at hand for the EP to tackle than concocting a list of threats and criticisms to officially make against Russia. It's disappointing to see that it's more focused on such issues than those much closer to home. Their supporters might argue that Russia's alleged assassinations, attacks, and disinformation plots constitute pressing domestic threats, but none of these have been publicly proven and thus remain speculation.

The EU is approaching an historic crossroads whereby it can finally become more independent of American influence or it can continue to languish under the boots of [US neo-imperialism](#). Judging by the latest resolution, it regrettably appears that the EP is opting for the latter after jumping on America's anti-Russian bandwagon to score political points with their patron across the Atlantic. This is dangerous and counterproductive to EU interests. What's more, it's also deeply unfortunate too since the EP can and should put its legislative skills to work trying to solve more urgent crises like COVID-19 instead.

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