

No Appeasement in East-West Relations: “New Cold War” Sanctions against Russia Prevail, Extended to July 2016

By [Fort Russ](#)

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On the sidelines of the G20 summit in Turkey, the leaders of Western countries agreed to extend sanctions against Russia for another six months until July, 2016. Reuters reported this citing a senior diplomatic source in the EU.

According to Reuters, the president of the US, Barack Obama, the chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, the prime ministers of Great Britain and Italy, David Cameron and Matteo Renzi, as well as the foreign minister of France, Laurent Fabius, participated in the meeting. The decision to extend sanctions was taken to keep up the pressure on Russia on the eve of local elections in Donbass. “Elections in Ukraine – this is a complex task. We have the change to get what we want if play the sanctions card. Financial sanctions should remain in force until the end,” the source said.

On this note, Reuters noted that sanctions will be continued despite calls for closer cooperation with Russian president Vladimir Putin in the fight against the Islamic State.

On November 18, The Wall Street Journal reported EU and US plans to extend and expand sanctions against Russia. The measures and activities which they want to prolong include restrictions on cooperation with Russian defense and energy companies.

Sanctions are in effect against Russia by a number of countries, particularly the US and EU states. Restrictive measures began to be introduced against the background of the annexation of Crimea to Russia in March 2014 and in connection with the conflict in Eastern Ukraine in which, according to numerous statements by Moscow, it is not participating. One hundred and fifty individuals (both Russians and Ukrainians) as well as companies, organizations, and associations (in particular, Crimean, and, according to the EU, “separatist” ones) are on the black list of the EU.

The Minsk measures adopted as a result of the meeting of the leaders of the “Normandy Quartet” countries (Ukraine, Russia, Germany, France) in February, 2015, provide for the establishment of a ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the contact line, constitutional reform (to enter into force by the end of 2015 with a new constitution), legislative recognition of the special status of separate districts of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, and the holding of local elections.

According to the 12 point document, issues regarding local elections should be discussed

and agreed upon with representatives of designated districts of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions. Elections themselves should be conducted in compliance with the relevant standards of the OSCE and monitored by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

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