

Petition Demanding Sanctions for Yanukovych Appears on U.S. Government Website

By [The Moscow Times](#)

November 27, 2013



The Ukrainian president and his administration are under fire for reneging on signing an Association Agreement with the EU. **Denis Grishkin**

A [petition](#) posted on a U.S. government website is urging the Obama administration to impose personal sanctions on Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and the country's Cabinet of Ministers after they backtracked on plans to sign a trade deal with the European Union later this week.

"We cannot accept the fact that President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych and his government deny the right of the people of Ukraine to become closer to the Western civilization," says the petition, submitted Tuesday to the "We, the People" petition platform.

The petition gathered over 2,000 signatures within a day of its appearance Tuesday, but will

need to amass at least 100,000 signatures by Dec. 26 to receive the attention of relevant U.S. officials.

The signatories propose denying Yanukovich, Ukrainian officials and their families entrance to the United States and European Union and freezing the bank accounts of any companies affiliated with them if the landmark agreement goes unsigned.

The Cabinet suspended preparations to sign the free-trade agreement in an abrupt political turnaround last Thursday, citing a need for measures to develop Ukraine's domestic market and "restore the lost production output and areas of trade and economic relations with Russia and other CIS member" in a statement on the Cabinet's website.

The decision was immediately censured by opposition parties and sparked impassioned street protests in Kiev, which peaked at 100,000 participants on Sunday and have continued throughout this week.

The sudden reversal was a victory for Russian politicians, who have long resisted Ukraine's economic integration with the European Union while pushing Ukraine to join the Russian-led Customs Union of former Soviet republics.

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