

EU Adds 15 to Sanctions List, Branded 'Shameful' by Russia

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Russian armed forces Chief-of-Staff Valery Gerasimov delivers a speech during a conference titled Military and Political Aspects of European Security in Moscow.

The European Union has imposed asset freezes and travel bans on 15 Russians and Ukrainians over Moscow's action in Ukraine, including Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, but has steered clear of any sanctions on business leaders.

The latest list, released Tuesday, also included Lyudmila Shvetsova, a deputy chairman of the State Duma, Valery Gerasimov, chief of staff of Russia's armed forces, and separatist leaders in Ukraine.

It did not include the heads of Russian energy giants such as Rosneft's Igor Sechin, who had been included on a new U.S. sanctions list on Monday.

The Russian Foreign Ministry reacted negatively to the latest EU sanctions list, saying the union was following Washington's lead and should be ashamed of itself.

"Instead of forcing the Kiev clique to sit at the table with southeastern Ukraine to negotiate the future structure of the country, our partners are doing Washington's bidding with new unfriendly gestures aimed at Russia," the ministry said.

The EU has now imposed sanctions on 48 people for actions it says have undermined Ukraine's territorial integrity.

Russia annexed the Crimea region after Ukraine's pro-Moscow president was ousted in February by protesters demanding closer links with Europe. Kiev and the West accuse Russia of stirring up a separatist campaign in the east, a charge Moscow denies.

The EU decision coincided with an earlier White House announcement that the U.S. was imposing sanctions on seven Russians and 17 companies linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The U.S. has been much more aggressive in the penalties it has imposed on Russia than the EU, which depends heavily on Russia for energy and has close trading links.

The EU has so far only put sanctions on individuals, not companies. The European Commission is drawing up a list of tougher economic sanctions, possibly affecting trade or the energy or finance sectors, that could be imposed on Russia.

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