

Russia Says Expanded EU Sanctions 'Undermine Trust'

May 13, 2014

The  Moscow Times

Russia has criticized the European Union for expanding sanctions over the Ukraine crisis and urged the EU to respect self-rule votes in two eastern Ukrainian provinces.

"By continuing its faulty, anti-Russian sanctions logic, the EU undermines trust in itself as a partner and casts doubt on its claim to an objective role in supporting a resolution of Ukraine's internal conflict," the Foreign Ministry said Monday in a statement.

The EU imposed sanctions on two Crimean companies and 13 people on Monday in response to Moscow's annexation of the region and its support for Russian-speaking separatists. The EU had already imposed asset freezes and visa bans on 48 Russians and Ukrainians.

Russia accuses the EU of helping the interim Ukrainian government come to power in what Moscow says was a coup d'etat in February, when then-President Viktor Yanukovich fled after three months of protests over his decision to spurn an EU trade pact and turn to Moscow.

"It's time for Brussels to stop seeing the substantial part of the Ukrainian people who do not

accept the Kiev authorities as 'Russian separatists' and understand that it will be impossible to resolve the conflict without acknowledging its internal nature," the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

"It behoves the EU to respect the results of the referendums by residents of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and support the realization of the will of the people through dialogue between representatives of Kiev and southeastern Ukraine," it said.

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