Australia Announces New Sanctions Against Russia Over Ukraine

By <u>The Moscow Times</u>

September 01, 2014

SYDNEY — Australia on Monday unveiled fresh sanctions against Russia over what Prime Minister Tony Abbott called its "bullying" of neighboring Ukraine, where the Kremlin is accused of backing pro-Russian insurgent groups battling the government in Kiev.

The sanctions, which restrict arms exports and the access of Russian state-owned banks to Australian capital markets, build on financial sanctions and travel bans enacted by Australia in March.

"So far, at least 2,500 people have lost their lives in this conflict. Let's be clear about what is happening here. Russia started it and Russia must take responsibility for this loss of life," Abbott told parliament.

"So, Madam Speaker, I can inform the house that Australia will lift its sanctions against Russia to the level of the European Union."

The U.S. and EU have gradually tightened economic sanctions against Russia, first imposed after Moscow annexed Crimea following the ousting of Kiev's pro-Russian president by protesters in February.

EU leaders agreed Saturday to draw up new economic sanctions against Moscow, a move hailed by the United States, which is planning tighter sanctions of its own and wants to act jointly with Europe.

So far, however, the measures have done little to deter Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has in recent days compared Kiev's attempts to recapture rebellious cities with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.

The five-month conflict in Ukraine reached a dangerous point last week after NATO said that well more than 1,000 Russian troops had crossed the Ukrainian border and were fighting alongside pro-Moscow separatists.

Abbott has struck perhaps the toughest line of any Western leader against the rebels in Ukraine, accused by Western countries and intelligence agencies of shooting down Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 in July, killing all 298 passengers and crew, including 28 Australians.

See also:

[Malaysian Plane Crashes in Conflict-Torn Eastern Ukraine](#)

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/09/01/australia-announces-new-sanctions-against-russia-over-ukraine-a38906