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Japan Promises New Sanctions Against Russia for Friday

By The Moscow Times

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A view of the Kuril Islands.

The Japanese government is ready to bring further costs against Russia over its policy on Ukraine and new sanctions could be unveiled as soon as Friday, local media have reported.

Hiroshige Seko, the country's deputy chief cabinet secretary, said Thursday Japan was mulling additional sanctions against Russia similar to measures taken by the European Union and U.S., the TASS news agency reported.

The sanctions will be unveiled Friday and could for the first time place restrictions on Russia's financial and energy sectors, Japanese media reported, citing government sources.

Japan — a member of the group of seven leading industrial nations — has already imposed several rounds of sanctions against Russia following its annexation of Crimea in March and perceived support of separatists in the east of Ukraine.

However, Tokyo will take care to ensure that any new sanctions are "restrictive" so as not to fan the flames of an ongoing territorial dispute with Moscow over the Southern Kurils, Japan's Kyodo News reported Thursday.

The Kuril Islands, known as the Northern Territories in Japan, have been the subject of an ongoing dispute between the two countries since the end of World War II with both laying claim to the territory.

Last month, Moscow dispatched 1,000 troops and five attack helicopters to the islands to carry out training exercises, prompting a strong rebuke from Japan.

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