

Russia Bans Entry to Pro-Ukraine European Politician Rebecca Harms

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Rebecca Harms

A prominent EU legislator known for her pro-Ukraine stance claims she was barred from entering Russia on Thursday in what could constitute the first such incident in the history of the European Parliament.

"I was told to take the next airplane back and any entry into Russia would be considered a criminal act," Rebecca Harms said on her Facebook page, after landing at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport.

Russian culture news website Colta.ru said the German lawmaker, who heads the Green faction in the European Parliament, was declared "persona non grata."

No official explanation was offered for the incident as of Thursday.

Harms was traveling to Moscow to attend a court hearing in the case of Nadezhda

Savchenko — a Ukrainian army pilot in Russian custody for her supposed involvement in the death of two Russian journalists during the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, a charge she has denied.

Western countries, including the EU, have imposed sanctions against Russia, including blacklisting dozens of Russian businessmen and officials, for backing pro-Moscow separatists in their five-month war against the Ukrainian governmental army.

Russia has imposed mirror sanctions against a handful of U.S. and Canadian officials, banning them from entering the country, and has introduced a year-long ban on Western food imports.

A Russian Foreign Ministry official said Thursday that sanctions against EU officials were also on the cards, but gave no details.

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