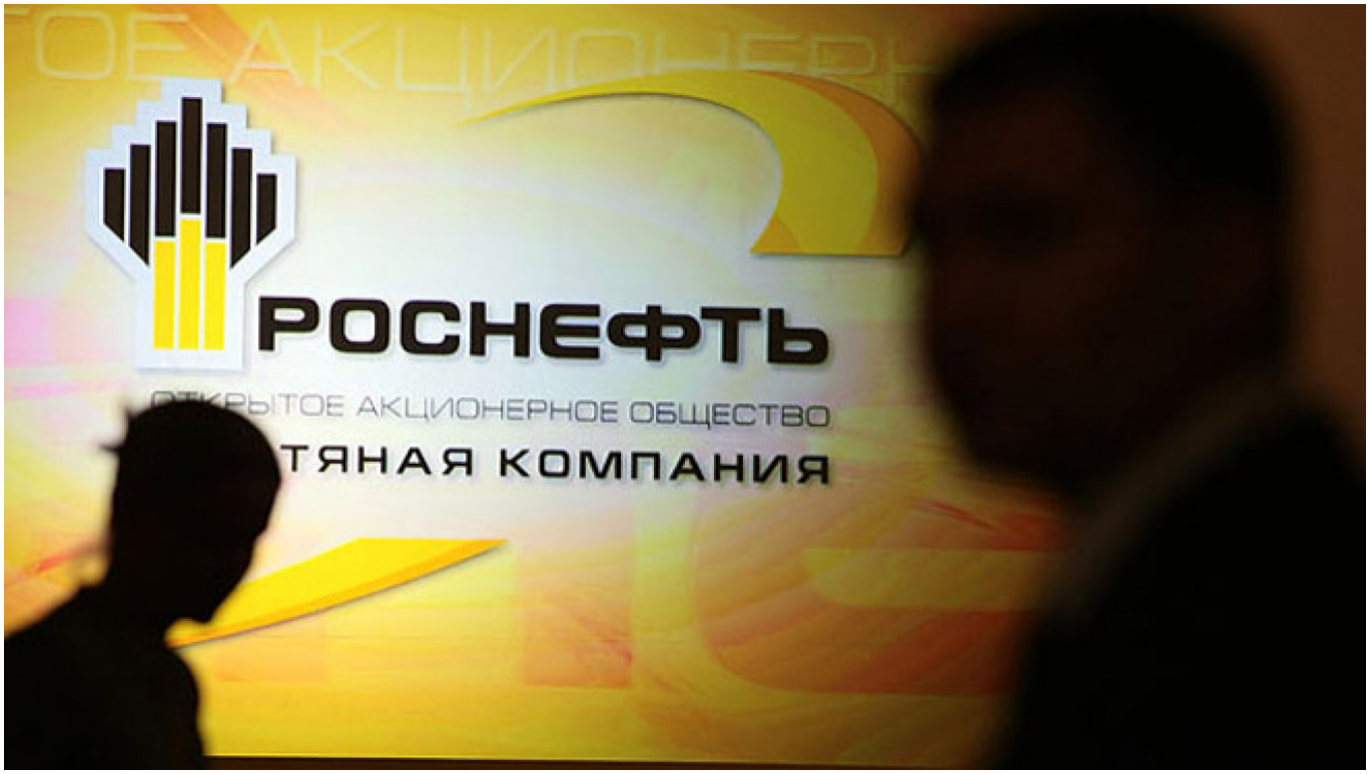
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EU Refuses to Release Confidential Sanctions Information to Rosneft

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Rosneft's legal team said it needed access to the confidential documents in order to reveal why sanctions were targeted specifically against the oil company.

The European Council has refused to release confidential documents on the European Union's sanctions against Russia as part of state-owned oil giant Rosneft's lawsuit against the council, RBC news agency reported Friday.

Rosneft filed its suit in a bid to cancel all sanctions against it as part of the EU's sectoral sanctions against Russia imposed on July 31.

Rosneft argued that sectoral sanctions that ban the company from receiving certain technology and from obtaining loans in Western banks are illegal. The company retained British lawyer Thomas Beazley to represent its interests in the case. Beazley is also representing ousted Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych in a European court for a similar lawsuit, the report said.

According to RBC, Rosneft attempted to obtain confidential EU documents that included

statements of proceedings, drafts and instructions on how to communicate with Russia over the annexation of Crimea.

Rosneft's legal team said it needed access to the confidential documents in order to reveal why sanctions over Russia's annexation of the peninsula and involvement in the conflict in Ukraine's east were targeted specifically against the oil company, and were thus baseless.

According to RBC, the EU denied access to these documents for fear that the contents "would provide opportunities to third parties — including parties to the conflict in eastern Ukraine — to get a notion of how the council's attitude to the conflict had changed."

Earlier, in September, the European Council's General Secretariat had refused to release another 58 documents that Rosneft had requested.

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