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Germany's Merkel Says No Chance of Putin Being Invited to G7 Summit

By The Moscow Times

January 16, 2015



German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaks at a session of the lower house of parliament Bundestag in Berlin, Jan. 15.

BERLIN — There is no chance that Russian President Vladimir Putin will be invited to the next meeting of G7 leaders, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who will host the summit, has said.

"The G7 and former G8 group has always viewed itself as a community of values," Merkel told Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper in an interview published Thursday.

"The annexation of Crimea, which is a blatant violation of the principles of international law, and the events in eastern Ukraine are serious violations of these common values."

That was why there was no chance "at this point" that Putin might be invited to the G7 summit in Bavaria in June, Merkel said and repeated her stance that Europe could not consider lifting sanctions against Russia as long as the reasons for imposing them still applied.

"In spring we will discuss the question how to deal with the sanctions that we decided to impose after Russia's annexation of Crimea," she said. "Given the current situation, they will remain in place."

Last week, Merkel said Europe would not consider lifting sanctions until all elements of a 12-point peace agreement signed in September between Ukraine and pro-Russian rebels were fully implemented.

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