

U.S. Will Not Lift Russian Sanctions in Exchange for Syria Cooperation

By [The Moscow Times](#)

November 24, 2015



White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest

The United States will not lift sanctions imposed on Russia in exchange for an expansion of its counter-terrorism operation in Syria, White House spokesman Josh Earnest announced at a press conference Monday, posted on the White House briefing room website.

"I do not envision a scenario in which sanctions relief is offered to Russia in exchange for greater contributions to Islamic State," Earnest said.

The sanctions were imposed over Russia for its role in the Ukrainian crisis and would be lifted only after full implementation of the Minsk agreements, he said.

He added that the United States would welcome Russia in an anti-terrorist coalition if Russia would change its strategy to focus on the fight against terror rather than supporting regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

European Union leaders has also agreed to keep sanctions imposed on Russia over Ukrainian crisis, a senior diplomat told the Reuters news agency on Saturday. EU sanctions have been extended for at least six more months, the diplomat said, Reuters reported.

Following the G20 summit last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed that joint efforts from all G20 members are needed to defeat Islamic State, and that discussion of Syria's political reforms should be put aside for the moment, the TASS news agency reported at the time.

Putin's proposals were echoed by French President Francois Hollande who spoke to the French Parliament of the need to create an anti-terror coalition that would include Russia.

Islamic State is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/11/24/us-will-not-lift-russian-sanctions-in-exchange-for-syria-cooperation-a50894>