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EU Says Crimea Return Necessary for Lifting Russia Sanctions

By The Moscow Times

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The European parliament has named the return of the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed in 2014, to Ukraine as one of the necessary conditions for lifting sanctions against the country, according to a resolution published on the parliament's website.

“The restoration of Ukrainian control over the peninsula is one of the prerequisites for re-establishing cooperative relations with the Russian Federation, including the suspension of related sanctions,” the resolution passed by the EU parliament on Thursday said.

Previously, EU leaders said that the lifting of sanctions depended only on the complete fulfillment of the Minsk agreements, aimed at eliminating conflict in eastern Ukraine, the RBC news website reported.

EU deputies condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and will continue the policy of non-recognition of Russia's occupation [of Crimea], the resolution stated.

The document also said that an “unprecedented level” of human rights violations had been perpetrated against Crimean residents, especially against Crimean Tatars.

The resolution was supported by 472 EU deputies, while 79 deputies voted against it, according to RBC.

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