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EU Calls Upon UN Countries to Impose Sanctions Against Russia

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On the second anniversary of Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, the European Union has once again condemned Moscow's actions and called upon the countries of the United Nations to join in sanctions against Russia.

“The EU will continue to adhere to the full implementation of its non-recognition policy, including through restrictive measures,” the statement published Friday on the Russian-language website of EU's European External Action Service said.

“The EU again calls upon the states-members of the United Nations to consider similar non-recognition measures in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution 68 / 262,” the statement said.

The statement added that following annexation, the human rights situation in Crimea has deteriorated to a serious degree. The EU expressed particular concern over the persecution of the Crimean Tatars.

In addition, the EU has demanded that Russia release Ukrainian citizens Oleg Sentsov and Alexander Kolchenko, who have been "detained and convicted in violation of international law."

Ukrainian filmmaker Sentsov and his associate Kolchenko were detained in Crimea on terrorism charges and convicted for 20 and 10 years respectively by the Russian military court in August 2015. Sentsov and Kolchenko denied the charges.

Russian President Vladimir Putin formally annexed the Crimean Peninsula on March 18, 2014 after the disputed referendum carried out on March 16 showed 97 percent of voters supported joining Russia. The majority of the international community does not recognize the results of the referendum.

The Kremlin's actions were widely criticized by the West and resulted in the introduction of sanctions on Russia by the United States, the EU and other Western countries.

On March 27, 2014, a resolution condemning the seizure of the peninsula was adopted by the UN General Assembly. The document confirms the territorial integrity of Ukraine and calls upon all countries "to refrain from any action that could be interpreted as the recognition" of Crimea's transition to Russia.

The resolution was supported by 100 countries — 58 countries abstained from voting and 11 countries spoke out against it.

A number of countries backed the UN resolution but have not imposed sanctions against Russia: Mexico, Chile, Peru, Jordan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines, the RBC business news agency reported Friday.

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