

Top EU Politicians Say Russia Sanctions Will Likely Be Extended

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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European Union flags flutter outside the EU Commission headquarters in Brussels.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has announced that it is “too early” to discuss lifting the European Union's sanctions on Russia, the Reuters news agency reported Thursday.

Her statement is one of several made by high-ranking officials and politicians indicating that sanctions introduced as a result of Russia's role in the Ukrainian conflict are unlikely to be lifted in the near future.

Merkel made the statement at the G7 summit in Japan, a meeting that Russia is currently excluded from attending.

Head of the European Council Donald Tusk also used the high-level talks as a platform to discuss the measures, saying before the event that he was “quite sure” sanctions would be extended.

"I want to state clearly that our stance vis-a-vis Russia, including economic sanctions, will remain unchanged as long as the Minsk agreements are not fully implemented," Tusk said.

Earlier in the week, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said that she believed that sanctions against Russia would be extended.

"EU governments have tied the lifting of the sanctions to a full implementation of the Minsk agreements. So far, this has not happened," Mogherini told the German Die Welt newspaper, Reuters reported.

The current raft of sanctions were extended by Brussels at the end of December. The decision to continue the sanctions will be made at the end of June and must be agreed unanimously by all 28 member states.

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