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G7 Leaders Agree to Prolong Anti-Russian Sanctions

By The Moscow Times

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The G7 has agreed to extend sanctions imposed on Russia for its role in the Ukraine crisis, the Interfax news agency reported Friday.

The G7 group of world leaders is concerned about the deteriorating situation in the south-east of Ukraine, a document published on Japan's Foreign Ministry website said. They also repeated their refusal to recognize Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

“We recall that the duration of sanctions is clearly linked to Russia’s complete implementation of the Minsk agreements and respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty. Sanctions can be rolled back when Russia meets these commitments,” the statement said.

The statement stressed the importance of continuing the dialogue with Russia, but maintained that further sanctions could be put in place if the situation deteriorated.

“We recognize the importance of maintaining dialogue with Russia in order to ensure it

abides by the commitments it has made as well as international law and to reach a comprehensive, sustainable and peaceful solution to the crisis," the declaration said. " However, we also stand ready to take further restrictive measures in order to increase cost on Russia should its actions so require."

The United States, European Union and a number of other countries imposed economic and travel sanctions against Russia in 2014 following the annexation of Crimea. Russia responded to the restrictions with a ban on food imports from Western nations.

The G7 talks bring together world leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. Russia was barred from attending the high-level talks due to their actions in the ongoing Ukrainian crisis.

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