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EU Envoys Extend Russia Sanctions for Six Months — Reports

By The Moscow Times

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The Committee of Permanent Representatives in the European Union has agreed to extend sanctions on Russia until the end of January 2017, according to an unidentified diplomatic source, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

The sanctions imposed on Russia over its involvement in the Ukrainian crisis were extended for six months "in order to evaluate the implementation of the Minsk agreements," according to the source.

The decision is to be approved by the Council of the European Union by the end of the next month, before the expiration date of the existing sanctions against Russian state oil, defense and financial institutions, the source added.

Last week, after the EU prolonged sanctions against Crimea, President Vladimir Putin claimed that Russia is unable to implement the Minsk agreements, as they demand changes to the Ukrainian constitution, which can only be made by Kiev.

Kremlin Chief of Staff Sergei Ivanov called for an extension of the sanctions regime between Russia and the West as it boosts development of Russia's domestic production.

"It is a blessing in disguise," he said, TASS reported.

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