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Lithuania Warns Against Easing Anti-Russian Sanctions After Brexit

By The Moscow Times

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Lithuania's Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius has called for the European Union to maintain a strong position against Russia following Britain's decision to leave the EU, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

Speaking at the United Nations on Tuesday, Linkevicius said that he was concerned that the EU's position on anti-Russian sanctions could weaken without British support. He also criticized a number of EU countries for calling for more "flexible and pragmatic" sanctions, calling the idea "very counter-productive."

The EU is due to decide whether to extend sanctions against Russia next week. The measures were put in place following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and have continued due to Russia's role in the ongoing Ukrainian conflict.

Britain voted to leave the European Union last Thursday in a historic referendum. Fifty-two percent of British voters chose to leave the organization. The country has been a vocal critic of Russian policy, and has called for sanctions not to be lifted until the full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

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