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Sanctions Likely to Linger Under Trump, Says Russian Trade Rep.

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A return to the pre-sanctions level of trade between Russia and the United States will be difficult, Alexander Stadnik, Russia's U.S. trade representative has warned.

Stadnik said the inertia of the political system in Washington will work against U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, even if he hopes to improve trade relations with Russia.

"Even if we imagine that on Jan. 21 the new president's first or second decree will be the lifting of sanctions, not all the sanctions can be canceled by decree," Stadnik told RIA Novosti.

"[Sanctions relief] will need to overcome very strong resistance in Congress, if it is avoidable at all. Some of the sanctions that have been added during the period of 2014-2016 may have a long history," the trade representative said.

According to Stadnik, getting back to the starting point would be very difficult because it

would mean reforming investment flows and reoccupying market niches. Many market sectors once filled by American firms, he noted, have already been taken over by companies from Latin America, North Africa and Southeast Asia. He also mentioned the increase in Russian-Chinese relations since 2014.

The United States and the European Union levied a series of targeted sanctions against Russian individuals and sectors of the Russian economy in response to military involvement in Ukraine in 2014. Russia banned imports of food products from those countries which supported the sanctions. ⊠⊠⊠⊠⊠

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