The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Italy's PM Slams Economic Sanctions Against Russia

By Reuters

October 16, 2018



Giuseppe Conte / Flickr

European Union sanctions against Russia are damaging Italian businesses, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said on Tuesday, underscoring growing unhappiness in Rome over the long-running curbs on Moscow.

EU leaders imposed sanctions in 2014 to penalise Russia for annexing Crimea from Ukraine and backing rebels fighting government troops in the east of Ukraine.

The curbs on doing business with Russian banking, financial and energy sectors were renewed in June but expire at the end of January and are up for discussion in Brussels.

Italy has not yet confirmed that it will agree to extending them.

"Sanctions, for their own sake, only damage our companies, which we intend to protect, as well as Russia's civil society," Conte said, addressing parliament ahead of an EU summit in

Brussels on Thursday.

Related article: Putin Gets Love in Italy, But Not Much Else (Op-ed)

His comments came a day after Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini had described the EU sanctions as a "social, cultural and economic absurdity".

Conte said the EU meeting would provide an opportunity to discuss "how to correctly pursue what I define as a double-trackapproach: determination coupled with dialogue".

Conte is scheduled to meet Russia President Vladimir Putinnext week in Moscow. Salvini is due to lead a delegation ofItalian entrepreneurs later this week to a conference in Moscow organised by the Russian Industrialist Union.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/10/16/italys-pm-slams-economic-sanctions-against-russia-a63205