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U.S. Lifts Sanctions on 3 Russian Cargo Vessels Linked to Exports From Occupied Ukraine

April 01, 2026



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The United States has lifted sanctions on three Russian cargo vessels, including two container ships operated by FESCO, the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) said Tuesday.

The vessels — Fesco Magadan, Fesco Moneron and the general cargo ship SV Nikolay — were designated in 2022 over links to Russian leasing firms tied to sanctioned banks.

They are reported to have ties to Russian defense finance, government insiders and the export of resources extracted from occupied Ukraine.

OFAC said the two container ships were sanctioned as property of PSB Leasing, a subsidiary of Promsvyazbank, a key lender to Russia's defense industry.

SV Nikolay was sanctioned in April 2022 alongside other vessels associated with Alfa-Leasing,

which is part of Alfa Bank.

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Investigations by Reuters and PBS previously found that SV Nikolay was used by Russia to transport Ukrainian grain from the annexed port of Sevastopol to Turkey.

In 2025, British analysts from the Open Source Centre and journalists from The Kyiv Independent reported that the vessel was also shipping metallurgical coke from occupied Mariupol to Algeria.

The coke was likely to have been produced using coal from mines caught up in Russia’s sweeping privatizations of industry in occupied Ukraine.

The supplier of those shipments was identified as Hong Kong-registered company Green Rabbit, which specializes in exporting coal and wheat from Russian-occupied areas of eastern Ukraine.

Exiled Russian investigative outlet iStories has reported that the company is headed by Muslim Temerkayev, an adviser to Marat Kabaev, the father of former Olympic gymnast Alina Kabaeva, the alleged romantic partner of President Vladimir Putin.

Separately, OFAC issued General License No. 134, which temporarily authorizes transactions necessary for the sale, transport or unloading of Russian crude oil and petroleum products.

The license, valid until April 11, applies only to cargoes loaded onto vessels before March 12 and does not permit new shipments. It also does not override other U.S. sanctions regimes, including those related to Iran.

The easing of restrictions comes amid a sharp rise in global energy prices due to the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, which has given Russia an unexpected boost in oil and gas revenues.

Washington had earlier issued a temporary waiver to allow India to purchase seaborne Russian oil and gas.

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