

Washington Imposes Further Sanctions on Russia



Washington, July 31 (RHC)-- The United States has imposed additional sanctions on Russia over the crisis in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) on Thursday imposed sanctions on eleven more people and 15 more companies.

"Today's action underscores our resolve to maintain pressure on Russia for violating international law and fueling the conflict in eastern Ukraine," acting OFAC Director John Smith said in a statement. The Obama administration accuses Moscow of supporting and arming pro-Russian forces fighting in eastern Ukraine since last year. The Kremlin says the allegations are baseless.

On Thursday, the OFAC sanctioned affiliate companies of Russian oil giant Rosneft, as well as several organizations associated with one of the country's major banks -- Vnesheconombank among others. Also, five Crimean commercial ports located in the towns of Sevastopol, Feodoisa, Kerch, Evpatoria and Yalta, along with the Kerch ferry service were placed under sanctions.

In addition, the U.S. Treasury Department targeted a Ukrainian businessman from Donetsk, Oleksandr Yanukovich, son of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, who was overthrown by the Maidan protests in 2014.

Among other targets was Roman Rotenberg, the son of the Russian businessman Boris Rotenberg and the member of the Kontinental Hockey League Executive board.

Smith said that the U.S. "will continue to act to ensure the effectiveness of our sanctions, which will not be rolled back until the Minsk Agreements are fully implemented."

The United States alleges that Russia has failed to fulfill demands put forward by the Minsk agreement to resolve the Ukraine crisis.

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the Minsk agreement with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko in February following negotiations held in the presence of French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The United States imposed the first round of sanctions against Russia in 2014. Under the current economic sanctions, Russian banks are not eligible for long-term loans. Exporting certain oil industry technologies to Russia is also banned. In addition, exports of dual-use military equipment are not allowed to Russia and all future EU-Moscow military deals are banned.

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