

Question for written answer E-001136/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Future EU restrictive measures against Russia

The first batch of EU restrictive measures against Russia expires in March 2015. The second batch (visa bans and asset freezes for Russian officials linked to Russia's annexation of Crimea) ends in April and the most hard-hitting batch (imposed on Russian banks and energy firms) ends in July. The adoption of fresh sanctions against Russia is a must in the context of mounting evidence that Russian military personnel are present in eastern Ukraine and that the conflict is escalating, as demonstrated, for example, by the indiscriminate bombardment of civilians in Mariupol.

Nevertheless, the leaders of some Member States have called for an easing, or even a lifting, of the sanctions imposed on Russia. In this regard, by offering to lift its food ban, Moscow has begun to lobby what it considers to be sympathetic EU capitals. This conditionality applied by Russia – its 'pick-up tactic' – aims both to reward Russia-friendly Member States and to punish Russia's adversaries. More than ever before, this represents an attack against our core value and principle – solidarity.

What steps will the Commission take after the end of the first round of sanctions in March 2015 in order to deescalate the situation in eastern Ukraine and bring Russia to the negotiating table?