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**RUSSIA SANCTIONS MUST BE TIED TO PROGRESS ON UKRAINE PEACE: GABRIEL**

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Reuters, 29 Jan 2017

Germany and France agree that any moves to lift sanctions against Russia must be tied to progress in the peace process for eastern Ukraine, German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said on Saturday.

"We in Germany and France have a clear position on the sanctions," Gabriel said during the news conference with his French counterpart Jean-Marc Ayrault. "We wish to implement the Minsk peace process ... And that is the only way that sanctions can be lifted."

Gabriel said he and Ayrault also agreed that it was important that Germany and France express strong unified positions on issues. He said the two countries would create bilateral working groups to address issues such as Ukraine and Russia.

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Kaynak/Source: