
MERKEL, IN UKRAINE, VOWS TO UPHOLD RUSSIA SANCTIONS

02.11.2018

EurActiv (2 November 2018)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Kyiv on Thursday (1 November) she was determined to uphold sanctions against Russia for its role in the Ukraine conflict.

Unfortunately *□□ Minsk accords have not been respected, if we move forward its only a few millimetres at a time, sometimes we move backwards, the chancellor said during a visit to Kyiv, referring to the 2015 agreement designed to end the conflict.

Germany will therefore advocate that these sanctions are upheld, she said during a press conference with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

Russia must do a simple thing: leave Ukraine, pull out its troops, withdraw its arms and restore the territorial unity of the country, Poroshenko told journalists.

He denounced elections set for 11 November in the self-proclaimed republics of Donetsk and Lugansk in the east of the country.

We have condemned the Russian Federations organisation of these fake elections, Poroshenko said.

It is a clear sign the Kremlin is not ready for a peaceful solution.

The EU countries present, former and future members of the UN Security Council have condemned the illegitimate elections in Donbas.

We, as #EU Member States, fully support the independence, sovereignty & territorial integrity of #Ukraine within the internationally recognised borders.

We condemn the coming illegitimate elections of the so-called Luhansk Peoples Republic & Donetsk Peoples Republic. pic.twitter.com/tGdFQvYyRX

Maja Kocijajncic, spokesperson to EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini, said that the EU common position had been already expressed last September, calling on Russia to make full use of its influence on the separatists in this regard.

Merkels one-day trip to Kyiv was her first since the signing of the Minsk accord, which has so far failed to achieve its aim of bringing peace to eastern Ukraine.

The European Union and the US have imposed heavy sanctions on Russia over the annexation of

Crimea in 2014.

Moscow has also been accused of fuelling a rebel conflict in eastern Ukraine that has cost the lives of some 10,000 people, a charge it denies despite substantial evidence to the contrary.

The two leaders also discussed the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.

We know that Ukraine rejects this project. I consider it less critical and stand for the guarantees for Ukraine to make Ukraine keep its transit role. I think these negotiations are held with Russia; the issue is about the creation of the transit agreement. We want Ukraine to stay an important transit country, Merkel said.

The pipeline – which has been heavily criticised by Kyiv, the US and several European nations – is set to bypass Ukraine to bring supplies direct from Russia to Germany.

Nord Stream 2 aims to double the capacity of Nord Stream 1 by the end of 2019.

Kaynak/Source: