

# Russia Warns West Over 'Foolish' Sanctions



Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev

MOSCOW (Press TV) – Russia has described as “foolish” the Western sanctions imposed on the country, warning that European countries won’t be able to return to the Russian market once the sanctions are removed.

“These foolish sanctions will pass, but international relations will continue. And currency markets will open up,” Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said in an interview with Vesti 24 TV channel.

“The niches in our [Russian] economy, which will by then be occupied by local produces or other foreign producers... our European counterparts wouldn’t be able to come back,” he added.

He pointed out that Asian and Latin

American companies that will replace the European ones in the Russian market will maintain their positions after the sanctions are over.

“This is the price Europe will have to pay” for attempting to exert economic pressure on Russia.

“We’re decent people. If we reach agreements, then we fulfill the existing contracts, including those with our Latin American and Asian counterparts, of course. And those of our Western partners, who’ll be eager to return, will only be able to take the remaining share, nothing more,” he further noted.

If the European countries continue to be hostile toward Russia, “many of our products, a significant portion of our resources and much of our trade will

switch to the Asia-Pacific region,” the Russian premier further said.

Early in August, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered government agencies to restrict agricultural imports from the countries that have imposed sanctions on Moscow.

Medvedev enforced the economic tit-for-tat sanctions following a recent decision by the European Union and United States to tighten sanctions on Russia over the crisis in Ukraine.

The Western powers accuse Moscow of playing a role in the crisis in eastern Ukraine, which broke out when Kiev launched military operations to silence pro-Russia protests in April; Russia denies the accusation.

## French President Popularity at Record Low: Poll



French President Francois Hollande

PARIS (Press TV) – French President Francois Hollande’s popularity has plunged to a record low of 13 percent in September, a new poll shows.

The survey of 2,000 people, conducted by Ifop for French weekly Le Journal du Dimanche, showed that support for the French leader reached 13 percent in September, down by four percent from the

previous month.

The study marks Hollande’s lowest approval rating since he became the country’s president in May 2012. The poll also showed that Hollande is the country’s least popular president of modern times. At his lowest point, the popularity of former French president Nicolas Sarkozy stood at 28 percent.

The Ifop poll also revealed that the popularity of Hollande’s Prime Minister Manuel Valls slipped 1 percentage point to 35 percent this month, following a steady decline from 58 percent when he took office more than five months ago.

An earlier survey by Le Figaro magazine showed that 97 percent of French voters are against Hollande’s candidacy in the 2017 presidential election.

The results of the Ifop poll were released amid public outcry in France against the Hollande government’s failure to deal with economic woes and rising unemployment in the country.

Official figures showed last month that France’s unemployment rate rose for the nine consecutive month in July, with 3,424,000 people out of work, despite Hollande’s earlier pledge to bring down the rate.

France, Europe’s second-biggest economy, is grappling with political and economic crises seen as the worst since Hollande took power more than two years ago.

## Ukraine Says Ceasefire Violations Hold Up Creation of Buffer Zone

KIEV (Reuters) - The Ukrainian military accused separatists and Russian troops on Sunday of continuing to shoot at government forces despite a Sept. 5 ceasefire and said Kiev would not go ahead with setting up a proposed buffer zone until the truce violations stopped.

Ukraine’s warring sides agreed on Friday to withdraw artillery and other heavy weapons to the outer limits of a 30 km (19 mile) buffer zone, building on the ceasefire in a conflict in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 3,000 people.

Military spokesman Andriy Lysenko said the pro-Russian separatists and Russian troops were continuing to target the positions of government forces.

“In the last 24 hours we have

ceasefire, then other points follow.

“At the moment the first point has not been fulfilled so we are not talking about the other points. If there is to be a withdrawal of forces then it should be synchronized together with the withdrawal of Russian forces,” he said.

Lysenko said separatists had carried out a further attack on the government-held international airport of Donetsk, the east’s main industrial hub. The rebels hold the city of Donetsk.

He said 40 separatist fighters had been killed in “defensive” fire by Ukrainian forces. There was no independent confirmation of this figure.

Lysenko’s comments echoed those of NATO’s top military



Ukrainian army soldiers from battalion “Aydar” practice shooting during a military drill in the village of Schastya, near the eastern Ukrainian town of Luhansk September 20, 2014.

lost two Ukrainian soldiers, eight have been wounded,” he told reporters on Sunday.

Asked about the buffer zone, he said: “One of the main points of the agreement is the

commander U.S. Air Force General Philip Breedlove, who said on Saturday that fighting was continuing in Ukraine and that the truce was a ceasefire “in name only”.

## White House Intruder Was Armed With Knife: Officials

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The Texas man arrested on Friday for charging at the White House was armed with a knife when he climbed a fence and made it into the executive mansion after President Barack Obama had departed, the U.S. Attorney’s Office said.

Previously, the U.S. Secret Service had said Omar Gonzalez, 42, had been unarmed.

Gonzalez was charged with unlawfully entering a restricted building or grounds while carrying a “deadly or dangerous weapon,” according to an affidavit released by the U.S. Attorney’s Office on Saturday.

If convicted, he faces up to 10 years in prison.

The affidavit, signed by Daniel

Hochman, a Secret Service officer on duty at the White House when the incident occurred, said Gonzalez was carrying a folding knife with a 3-1/2-inch long serrated blade.

It said Gonzalez went through the north doors and got inside the mansion.

“After he was apprehended, Omar Gonzalez told United States Secret Service Agent Lee Smart that he was concerned that the atmosphere was collapsing and (he) needed to get the information to the President of the United States so that he could get the word out to the people,” the affidavit said.

The incident, one of the most significant breaches since Obama became president, raised questions about security procedures at the White House, a heavily guarded complex filled with Secret Service officers and snipers.

The Secret Service increased security around the White House on Friday and started a review of its response, including a physical assessment of the area and interviews with involved personnel, the agency said. Shortly before the intrusion, Obama and his daughters had departed for Camp David. First Lady Michelle Obama had traveled separately to the presidential retreat in nearby Maryland.



BERLIN (Reuters) - Survivors of German victims of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 downed over Ukraine plan to sue the country and its president for manslaughter by negligence in 298 cases, the lawyer representing them said on Sunday.

Professor of aviation law Elmar Giemulla, who is representing three families of German victims, said that under international law Ukraine should have closed its air space if it could not guarantee the safety of flights.

“Each state is responsible for the security of its air space,” Giemulla said in a statement emailed to Reuters. “If it is not able to do so temporarily, it must close its air space. As that did not happen, Ukraine is liable for the damage.”

Bild am Sonntag Sunday mass newspaper quoted Giemulla as saying that by not closing its airspace, Ukraine had accepted that the lives of hundreds of innocent people would be “annihilated” and this was a violation of human rights.

The jetliner crashed in Ukraine in pro-Russian rebel-held territory on July 17, killing 298 people, two-thirds of them from the Netherlands. Four Germans died in the crash.

Ukraine and Western countries have accused the rebels of shooting the plane down with an advanced, Russian-made missile. Russia has rejected accusations that it supplied the rebels with SA-11 Buk anti-aircraft missile systems.

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EDINBURGH (Reuters) - Alex Salmond, the defeated leader of Scotland’s nationalists, on Sunday accused Prime Minister David Cameron and other London politicians of tricking Scottish voters out of independence by making a false “vow” about granting them new powers.

Salmond, who is stepping down as leader of the pro-independence Scottish National Party (SNP) after spearheading a failed campaign for Scotland to leave the United Kingdom, said Britain’s three main political parties had won last Thursday’s referendum vote by 55-45 percent by deception.

“I think the vow was something cooked up in desperation for the last few days of the campaign and I think everyone in Scotland now realizes that,” said Salmond, referring to a pledge made by Cameron and other leaders two days before the referendum to rapidly expand Scottish autonomy in the event of a “No” vote.

Though Cameron has said he is determined to deliver the new settlement he has since linked new powers for Scotland to agreeing new constitutional arrangements for the rest of Britain, including England, at the same time.

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CAIRO (Press TV) – A roadside bomb explosion near the Foreign Ministry in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, has claimed the lives of at least two policemen.

According to unnamed security officials, the explosion targeted a police checkpoint near the back entrance of the Nile-side ministry building, on Sunday.

Several more people were injured in the attack.

The attack comes days after a bomb explosion in the Sinai Peninsula killed about seven policemen and injured two others.

The government says around 500, almost all of them police forces and soldiers, have been killed in militant attacks since July 3 last year.

## Sierra Leone Begins Second Day of Ebola Shutdown

FREETOWN (Press TV) – Sierra Leone has observed the second day of a 72-hour nationwide shutdown aimed at preventing the spread of the deadly Ebola virus in the country.

Most people in Sierra Leone stayed indoors for the second day on Saturday with the exception of health professionals and security forces, while some 30,000 volunteers are going door-to-door to educate people on the virus.

However, the Freetown government has come under criticism over the shutdown, which critics say is a poorly planned publicity stunt. Some observers have also expressed concern over the quality of information being given out.

“While the supervisors were well trained, the visiting teams to families in some parts in the Western Area had poor training and could not deliver the information properly,” said Abubakarr Kamara, from the Health for All Coalition, a local charity.

Despite criticism from some health professionals that the shutdown could backfire, Sierra Leone has insisted on going ahead with the measure.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), at least 2,630 people have died of Ebola so far, while over 5,350 others are infected. Ebola is a form of hemorrhagic fever whose symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting and bleeding. The virus spreads through direct contact with infected blood, feces or sweat. It can also be spread through sexual contact or the unprotected handling of contaminated corpses.