

European Commission President Juncker: New US sanctions on Russia only after consultation of allies

In the wake of Donald Trump signing off on stricter US sanctions against Russia, the Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker** expressed his satisfaction, in principle, over the softening of the bill after the EU had expressed its concerns.

"I stated at the G7 summit in Taormina, Italy, and at the G20 summit in Hamburg, Germany, that if the Americans proceeded [with the adoption of new sanctions], we would be ready to react adequately in a matter of days. As a result, a significant proportion of the intended sanctions against Russia have been dropped. Moreover, the US Congress has now also committed to only apply sanctions after the country's allies are consulted. And I do believe we are still allies of the US", President **Juncker** said.

European interests can thus be taken into account in the implementation of any sanctions. If not, the President of the European Commission reserves the right to take adequate measures. If the US sanctions specifically disadvantage EU companies trading with Russia in the energy sector the EU is prepared to take appropriate steps in response within days.

"We are prepared", President **Juncker** said during a radio interview with the ARD's European studio in Brussels, broadcast today (Wednesday) at 20:30 on NDR Info. *"We must defend our economic interests vis-à-vis the United States. And we will do that."*

The EU is maintaining its own sanctions against Russia. However, in order to fully implement the Minsk Agreements, the G7 must unanimously agree on the sanctions, with close cooperation between the allies. The US bill could have an unintended impact on EU interests relating to energy supply security. The sanctions would affect energy transport and the maintenance of pipeline systems in Russia which supply the Ukrainian gas transit system. The new US sanctions could also impact EU efforts to further diversify the energy sector, particularly in the Baltic.