

UK hits Russian oligarchs and banks with targeted sanctions: Foreign Secretary statement

Oligarchs at the heart of Putin's inner circle and banks which have bankrolled the Russian occupation of Crimea have been targeted by the first wave of UK sanctions in response to Russia's further violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement to the House of Commons, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is today (Tuesday 22 February) designating the initial tranche of sanctions on Russia. The sanctions package targets oligarchs and banks associated with the Kremlin.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

This first wave of sanctions will hit oligarchs and banks close to the Kremlin. It sends a clear message that the UK will use our economic heft to inflict pain on Russia and degrade their strategic interests.

And we are prepared to go much further if Russia does not pull back from the brink. We will curtail the ability of the Russian state and Russian companies to raise funds in our markets, prohibit a range of high tech exports, and further isolate Russian banks from the global economy.

These will be surgically targeted sanctions that will hit Russia hard.

Using new powers introduced on 10 February, the UK has frozen the assets and imposed travel bans on three leading members of the Russian elite of particular significance to the Kremlin: Gennady Timchenko, Russia's sixth richest oligarch, and Boris and Igor Rotenberg, two long-standing associates of the regime.

Assets of five Russian banks involved in bankrolling the Russian occupation have also been frozen with immediate effect. This includes Bank Rossiya, which is particularly close to the Kremlin, Black Sea Bank for Development and Reconstruction, IS Bank and Genbank. The assets of Promsvyazbank, the pivotal bank in propping up Russia's defence sector, have also been frozen.

The UK will also sanction those members of the Russian Duma and Federation Council who voted to recognise the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk in flagrant violation of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty.

In addition, over the coming weeks we will extend the territorial sanctions imposed on Crimea to non-Government controlled territory in the so-called breakaway republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. No UK individual or business will be able to deal with this territory until it is returned to Ukrainian control.

In the event of further aggressive acts by Russia against Ukraine, we have prepared an unprecedented package of further sanctions ready to go. These include a wide ranging set of measures targeting the Russian financial sector, and trade.

As part of this, should Russia not de-escalate the UK will shortly introduce legislation which will, amongst other steps, prevent Russia from issuing sovereign debt on UK markets. Working with partners we will effectively be isolating Russia from the global economy, and making it far more difficult for oligarchs and businesses to operate outside their own borders.

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