

White House Imposes New Sanctions on Russian Elite



Summary: The United States imposed new economic sanctions on Russian elites starting Friday.

After several instances of reported bad behavior from Moscow, the White House has issued new sanctions on Russian elites. According to the [Washington Post](#), "The United States imposed new economic sanctions on senior Russian politicians, companies and business leaders Friday, citing a list of complaints including Moscow's attempts to undermine Western democracies, support of separatists in Ukraine and its backing for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad."

The sanctions will target 17 government officials, a state-owned weapons company, 7 oligarchs, and 12 companies affiliated with the oligarchs. These people and entities have close relationships with recently re-elected president Vladimir Putin, who was notably not sanctioned. When the Washington Post pressed government officials on why Putin escaped punishment, they did not provide a detailed answer.

"The Russian government operates for the disproportionate benefit of oligarchs and government elites," Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin told the Washington Post. "Russian oligarchs and elites who profit from this corrupt system will no longer be insulated from the consequences of their government's destabilizing activities."

The list of targets includes Igor Rotenberg and Kirill Shamlov who are key figures in Russia's energy industry; the weapons trading company Rosoboroneexport; and aluminum magnate Oleg Deripaska.

White House officials said that these sanctions were not meant to harm Russian citizens but instead were meant to cripple Russian elites, some of which have indirect ties to President Donald Trump. For instance, Deripaska is a billionaire with a close relationship to Trump's former campaign manager, Paul Manafort, who has been indicted by special counsel Robert Mueller.

Mueller was hired to investigate Russia's role in the 2016 US Presidential Election, and so far, he has indicted five members of Trump's inner circle. Four of which have pled guilty to charges and are cooperating with the pending probe.

"I think it's important to see in today's action, a message. And that message is that actions have consequences," an anonymous official told the Washington Post. "Today's announcements are the result of a decision that the Russian government has made and continues to make in choosing a path of confrontation."

Friday's sanctions come after President Trump's top advisors have been pushing for more punishments towards Russia. Russia has reportedly been responsible for hacking US electoral systems, attacking Ukraine's computer systems, poisoning a British spy, and other offenses.

The sanctions were supported by Congress, and they were approved by Trump, who the Washington Post said signed the decree "grudgingly."

"These new sanctions send a clear message to Vladimir Putin that the illegal occupation of Ukraine, support for the Assad regime's war crimes, efforts to undermine Western democracies, and malicious cyberattacks will continue to result in severe consequences for him and those who empower him," Senator Marco Rubio said.

- [White House Sanctions Russia for Election Meddling](#)
- [Top Official Says Russia Hacked US Voter Systems](#)
- [FBI Looking Into Second Trump-Russia Dossier](#)

What do you think of the new sanctions against Russia's elites? Let us know in the comments below.

