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<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/04/18/359145/us-to-russia-fall-in-line-or-face-tougher-sanctions/>

US to Russia: Fall in line on Ukraine or face tougher sanctions

4/18/2014

The White House says the United States and its European allies are ready to impose tougher sanctions if Russia does not fall in line with them on Ukraine.

On Friday, White House National Security Advisor Susan Rice said that Moscow would face the consequences of tougher sanctions if it failed to make good on its commitments made under a new international deal on Ukraine or went ahead to send Russian troops into the eastern part of the country.

"Those costs and sanctions could include targeting very significant sectors of the Russian economy," Rice told reporters at a White House briefing.

On Thursday, the foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine, the US and the European Union met in Geneva. They said after the meeting that all sides have agreed over steps to "de-escalate" the crisis in eastern Ukraine, where anti-Kiev protesters seized buildings in several towns and cities.

Ukrainian authorities have ordered a military offensive against the protesters, claiming that Russian special forces are fueling unrest in the country. A day later, the protesters said they were not bound by the agreement.

Rice said the US would be watching very closely "in coming days" to see whether Russia fulfill its commitments.

“We expect and we will be watching whether Russia does or does not uphold its responsibility to use its very considerable influence to restrain and withdraw those irregular military [forces] from the buildings and spaces that it's occupied,” she said.

"We believe that Russia has considerable influence over the actions of those who have been engaged in destabilizing activities in eastern Ukraine," Rice added.

"If we don't see action commensurate with the commitments that Russia has made yesterday in Geneva, which we all welcome, then obviously we've been very clear that we and our European partners remain ready to impose additional costs on Russia," she stated.

NATO says Russia has massed tens of thousands of well-equipped troops along its border with Ukraine.

Rice said new sanctions could be imposed on Russia in the event of a dramatic escalation of the Ukraine crisis, including "the potential for Russia to move its own forces on the border inside of Ukraine."

During the eight-hour meeting on Thursday, the four sides issued a joint a statement at the end of their talks in the Swiss city that reads:

“The Geneva meeting on the situation in Ukraine agreed on initial concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and restore security for all citizens.

“All sides must refrain from any violence, intimidation or provocative actions. The participants strongly condemned and rejected all expressions of extremism, racism and religious intolerance, including anti-Semitism.

“All illegal armed groups must be disarmed; all illegally seized buildings must be returned to legitimate owners; all illegally occupied streets, squares and other public places in Ukrainian cities and towns must be vacated.

“Amnesty will be granted to protesters and to those who have left buildings and other public places and surrendered weapons, with the exception of those found guilty of capital crimes.

“It was agreed that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission should play a leading role in assisting Ukrainian authorities and local communities in the immediate implementation of these de-escalation measures wherever they are needed most, beginning in the coming days. The US, EU and Russia commit to support this mission, including by providing monitors.

“The announced constitutional process will be inclusive, transparent and accountable. It will include the immediate establishment of a broad national dialogue, with outreach to all of Ukraine’s regions and political constituencies, and allow for the consideration of public comments and proposed amendments.

“The participants underlined the importance of economic and financial stability in Ukraine and would be ready to discuss additional support as the above steps are implemented.”