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3/17/2014

Sanctions Target Two Crimea-Based Separatist Leaders, Leader of Ukrainian Choice, and Former Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated Crimea-based separatist leaders Sergey Aksyonov, and Vladimir Konstantinov, leader of Ukrainian Choice Viktor Medvedchuk, and former President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13660, which targets persons contributing to the current situation in Ukraine. Aksyonov, Konstantinov, Medvedchuk, and Yanukovich are being designated for their role in actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine. They are also being designated for their role in actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine. Medvedchuk is also being designated because he has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support to Yanukovich and because he is a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine and actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine.

“President Obama has been crystal clear that we will impose costs on those who undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and today’s actions follow through on that commitment,” said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen. “The steps taken by the separatist leaders designated today and former President Yanukovich violate Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. While we continue to urge a de-escalation of the situation in Ukraine, the conduct of those sanctioned today cannot go unanswered.”

Aksyonov claims to be the Prime Minister of Crimea and has rejected the authority of the legitimate government in Kyiv. He has appealed to Moscow to send troops to Ukraine. Aksyonov has also announced that local security forces including the police and the army, which are under Kyiv’s command, would be brought under his control.

Konstantinov has been acting as the speaker of the Crimean parliament, which on March 11, 2014, declared independence from Ukraine. Konstantinov signed the declaration, and he has stated that he intends to draft a constitution for the so-called Republic of Crimea. Consistent with this position, Konstantinov declared on March 7, 2014 that Ukrainian troops remaining in Crimea should leave Crimea unless they were willing to renounce their loyalty to Kyiv and serve the region’s new administration.

In the accelerated run-up to the March 16 referendum on Crimea joining the Russian Federation, which violated the Ukrainian constitution, Konstantinov has stated that Crimea will never rejoin Ukraine and that it will adopt the Russian ruble as its official currency soon after the referendum. He has also stated that he hopes that Crimea will remain a parliamentary republic with broad powers if it joins Russia, and that all state institutions, including the border service, army, navy, and security service, will report to Russia in the event that Crimea joins it.

Viktor Medvedchuk is the leader of Ukrainian Choice, a group through which he has been stirring conflict in Kherson, a province just north of Crimea, through advertising campaigns designed to pit supporters and foes of Russia’s attempt to annex Crimea against one another. A long-time proxy and close personal friend of Russian

President Vladimir Putin, he acted as a liaison between Yanukovich and Putin. Medvedchuk and Andriy Kluyev, the former Secretary of National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, were involved in the development of the scenario that led to clashes outside the Presidential Administration in Kyiv on December 1, 2013.

After first abandoning Kyiv and ultimately fleeing to Russia, Yanukovich called upon Putin to send Russian troops into Ukraine. The government of Yanukovich has engaged in the improper use of force and weapons against protesters in Kyiv and other cities in Ukraine, leading to numerous injuries, tortures, and deaths.

As a result of Treasury's action, any assets of the persons designated today that are within U.S. jurisdiction must be frozen. Additionally, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from conducting any transactions with these four individuals.

Identifying Information

Name: Sergey Valeryevich AKSYONOV

AKA: Serhiy Valeryevich AKSYONOV

AKA: Sergey AKSYONOV

A.K.A: Sergei AKSYONOV

AKA: Sergiy AKSYONOV

AKA: Sergei AKSENOV

DOB: November 26, 1972

POB: Balti, Moldova

Name: Vladimir Andreyevich KONSTANTINOV

DOB: November 19, 1956

POB: Vladimirovka, Moldova

Name: Viktor MEDVEDCHUK

DOB: August 7, 1954

POB: Pochyot, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia

Name: Viktor Fedorovich YANUKOVYCH

DOB: July 9, 1950

POB: Yenakiyev, Donetsk Region, Ukraine

Alt. POB: Makiivka, Donbas, Ukraine

Title: Former President of Ukraine