President Trump Cracks Down on Russia

Tuesday, as President Donald Trump was meeting with his counterpart, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, the Treasury Department was dropping the hammer on Russia hard with renewed sanctions.

“[W]e’ve had some very, very good discussions,” the president said in a joint appearance in the Oval Office. “It’s going to continue throughout the day. And I think a lot of progress has been made.”

Poroshenko responded that his government is fighting to “bring freedom and democracy” to his country, and the president’s “very strong support in security and defense” was helping them to be successful. He said he admired the president’s leadership and the effective steps he has taken to support Ukraine’s territorial integrity and sovereignty.

You can see the entire appearance in the video clip above.

Following their meetings, the White House issued two sets of readouts: one for Poroshenko’s meeting with the president and a second for his meeting with Vice President Mike Pence. The first states:

> President Donald J. Trump met today with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine to discuss support for the peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine and President Poroshenko’s reform agenda and anticorruption efforts.

The second states:

> The vice president met today with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko to reaffirm the United States’ support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine and

> for President Petro Poroshenko’s implementation of the reforms necessary to transform Ukraine into a peaceful, prosperous and secure European country. The vice president highlighted continuing U.S. support for the Normandy Format negotiations to implement the Minsk agreements and stressed the importance of continued reforms to fight corruption, improve the business climate and keep Ukraine’s International Monetary Fund program on track.

Meanwhile, the Department of the Treasury issued a new round of sanctions against Russian government officials and businesses connected with the Russian occupation of the Crimean Peninsula. The Office of Foreign Assets Control designated “38 individuals and entities under Ukraine-related authorities, including one entity that has engaged in the evasion of existing sanctions, two Russian government officials and two individuals acting for or on behalf of a government official, two entities that are owned or controlled by an individual previously designated and 11 individuals and entities that operate in the Crimea region of Ukraine.”

“These designations will maintain pressure on Russia to work toward a diplomatic solution,” Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said. “This administration is committed to a diplomatic process that guarantees Ukrainian sovereignty, and there should be no sanctions relief until Russia meets its obligations under the Minsk agreements.”

The sanctions apply to “any property or interest in property of the designated persons in the possession or control of U.S. persons or within the United States must be blocked.” They also prohibit U.S. citizens from engaging in business ventures and transactions with any of the sanctioned individuals and entities.

Click here to read the entire sanctions statement. {eoa}