

# Alona Lebedieva: Weak EU Sanctions and Double Standards Undermine Western Unity and Play into the Kremlin's Hands

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On September 14, U.S. President Donald Trump once again questioned the effectiveness of European sanctions against Russia. Speaking to journalists, he stated bluntly: Europe "talks a lot but does little." His main grievance is that allies continue to buy Russian oil, effectively financing the war they condemn only in words.



Alona Lebedieva

Trump stressed that Washington is ready to go further but will not allow the United States to remain the only side that is truly pressuring the Kremlin. "I will impose new sanctions, but Europe must strengthen its own. Right now they only talk and keep buying oil from Russia," he emphasized. This statement did not sound like a diplomatic hint but rather a sharp signal to the allies.

"The problem is obvious: inside the EU there are countries that openly block joint decisions and remain dependent on Russian oil — primarily Hungary and Slovakia. Moreover, the largest buyers of Russian oil today are Hungary and Turkey, and it is precisely these countries that Trump has publicly praised more than once," stresses Alona Lebedieva, owner of the Ukrainian diversified industrial and investment group of companies Aurum Group.

But other states are not without fault. Investigations prove that despite sanctions, a number of European companies continue doing business with Russia — buying raw materials or supplying equipment. Formally, the EU declares solidarity with Ukraine, but in reality, economic ties with the aggressor continue. This double game has become the target of criticism from the U.S. president. At the same time, Trump himself is not without "double standards": he makes demands that the EU cannot implement quickly. This creates a convenient space for him to increase pressure further — counting on Europe falling behind, while the U.S. avoids the next steps.

“Despite all the contradictions, the overall picture for Europe looks different from how Trump presents it. The share of Russian energy imports to the EU has fallen fourfold — from about 40% in 2021 to 10% in 2024. The Union has set itself the goal of completely abandoning them by 2027. This is a process that is objectively impossible to accomplish within a few months. Slowness here is more a technical and economic reality than a sign of ‘weakness,’” Lebedieva notes.

But here lies the main contradiction. The U.S., an overseas country, has been bearing the greatest burden of supporting Ukraine for several years. Meanwhile, Europe — which shares a border with Russia and feels the threat directly — often appears weaker in its own security. Such indecision not only irritates Washington but also undermines the very idea of Western unity.

“Trump may be unpredictable and even cynical, but he strikes at the very heart of Europe’s problem: its unwillingness to give up double standards. The EU loses face every time it promises support for Ukraine in words while in practice leaving loopholes for Russian oil and gas. America can afford to wait — Europe cannot. For Europe, the war is happening hundreds of kilometers away, not across the ocean,” Lebedieva emphasizes.

For Ukraine, the situation is even sharper: every ton of Russian oil purchased by Europeans turns into a shell that may strike our cities tomorrow. Europe has indeed done a lot, and this deserves gratitude. But war does not tolerate half-measures. The time for halfway decisions is over. Either Europe stands on the side of strength and principles, or it risks losing not only its own security but also the very economic benefits for which it hesitates.

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