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The European Parliament has called on the Council to strengthen the second phase of sanctions against Russia and be ready for the third phase (economic sanctions), which must be applied immediately. In a Resolution adopted by a large majority today, MEPs furthermore request the Council to swiftly apply an arms and dual-use technology embargo against Russia.

Elmar Brok MEP, Chairman of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, and the EPP Group's Coordinator in the Foreign Affairs Committee, Jos  Ignacio Salafranca S nchez-Neyra MEP, said:

"It is beyond doubt that Russia is continuing to stoke tensions in Eastern Ukraine by supporting and leading separatists and militias. It is necessary to make clear to Russia that the international community will not allow an outright breach of international law", they said.

"Russia must withdraw its troops from the Ukrainian border, lift the decree allowing for a military invasion of Ukraine, and issue clear orders to separatists and militias in Ukraine to immediately withdraw and refrain from all violence."

"Ukraine is a sovereign country and must be allowed to hold free and fair elections on 25 May, without outside interference. The OSCE and the EU have to send election observers to make sure international democratic rules are respected", they added.