Eastern Europe may start siding with Moscow, Polish official warns World

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Analyst: &Idquo;…we believe the desire to renew trade with Russia will be the biggest motivating factor for Europeans to relax sanctions, not so much cultural concerns." Photo: Polish Cabinet Chief Krzysztof Szczerski

WARSAW, Nov 30, 2017 - The EU will never recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, European Council President Donald Tusk tweeted on Nov. 24. Three days later, his fellow countryman, Polish Cabinet Chief Krzysztof Szczerski, warned that Eastern European countries may begin to side with Moscow over Kyiv if forced to choose in their conflict. " For the countries of our region, relations with Kyiv are not a function of relations with Moscow, " he said in an interview published on Nov. 27 on the tvp.info news site, adding that Poland could choose not to support Kyiv should its current conflict with Moscow escalate. Concorde analyst Zenon Zawada added: "The Russian government isn't as concerned with gaining Western recognition of the Crimean annexation as it is with getting the related sanctions relaxed or removed altogether. In our view, the tipping point would be a decision by PACE to relax or remove sanctions, which will be used by other Western legislative bodies to follow in the same path. Besides the slow pace of reforms and anti-corruption efforts, Ukraine has gotten into cultural disputes with its Eastern European neighbors, particularly Poland, as Szczerski pointed out in the interview. But we believe the desire to renew trade with Russia will be the biggest motivating factor for Europeans to relax sanctions, not so much cultural concerns. :

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