

Russia accuses West of Violating Budapest Memorandum on Ukraine



MOSCOW, March 19 (Xinhua) -- Moscow on Wednesday accused Western countries of violating the Budapest Memorandum which guarantees Ukraine's territorial integrity.

"The question is, how the guarantees (envisaged by the memorandum) could be matched with the United States and the European Union's threats to use sanctions against Ukrainian leadership during the riots in Kiev," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Russia said those threats could be qualified as economic pressure on the sovereign state, while permanent presence of the Western envoys at Maidan, the Independence Square in Kiev, could be qualified as active encouragement for the state coup.

The ministry also pointed out at the U.S. and EU refusal during those events in Kiev to consider the legitimate president of Ukraine as a partner.

"All these are examples of how the United States and European Union acted against

Ukraine's political independence and sovereignty in breach of their obligations under the Budapest Memorandum," the ministry said.

The Budapest Memorandum signed in December 1994 gave assurances to Ukraine's territorial integrity or political independence in exchange to Kiev's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Memorandum was signed by Russia, the United States and Britain.

Under the document, Ukraine gave up its world's third-largest nuclear weapons stockpile.



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