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Putin: New sanctions odd & ineffective – simply damage those who introduce them

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Speaking after a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Putin said that Russia has not ruled out responding with tit-for-tat sanctions. At the same time, he said, those measures would only be implemented if they did not harm Russia, and if they would help protect the country.

*"The government is thinking about that. But if they are to be imposed, this will be to create better conditions for ourselves,"* Putin said.

As for trade partnerships and cooperation in sectors targeted by the EU sanctions, Putin said that *"there is always an alternative"* in case somebody *"does not want to work with Russia."*

*"There are some things that are negative, but if we consider the problem in its totality, there is more positive than negative,"* Putin said, adding that sanctions open up opportunities for Russia's manufacturers.

Putin has criticized attempts to *"destabilize"* the situation in Ukraine rather than solve it. Putting the prime minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, Igor Plotnitsky, on the list of people sanctioned may jeopardize the peace talks in Ukraine, Putin said.

*"I have this seditious thought on my mind, that Ukraine itself is not a subject of interest, rather it is simply being used as a tool to undermine international relations,"* Putin said.