French MP visiting Crimea buys T-shirt that says 'Obama, you're a schmuck'

24/07/2015

Trends Ukraine turmoil

The senator, currently on a two-day visit to Crimea, was strolling along a picturesque quay when he reportedly came across an article of clothing that spoke for itself. Yves Pozzo di Borgo (who is also vice-president of the French-Russian Friendship Group of the Senate and member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and OSCE) immediately snapped the T-shirt up and even tried it on, Lifenews reported.

On Thursday, Mr Pozzo di Borgo noted that the reality on the ground in Crimea neither reflects the media nor the political narrative compiled in Europe.

"I am very happy that I came here, because listening to you [residents of Crimea], I understand the position, which is not expressed anywhere – in any of the media in Europe, in none of the Parliaments of Europe, nor in the European Parliament or the Council of Europe, nor the OSCE," he said.

READ MORE: No grounds to keep Russia sanctions in place – French MPs visiting Crimea

Di Borgo's colleague, member of the French National Assembly Thierry Mariani, said that there are no grounds to keep Russian sanctions in place and suggested lifting them *"as the US is lifting Cuba blockades."*

Crimea rejoined Russia last March following a referendum where over 96 percent of people voted in favor of reunification. The decision to hold a referendum was sparked by the Crimeans'

refusal to recognize the new coup-imposed government in Kiev as legitimate. Crimea, which is home to an ethnic majority Russian population, feared the new leadership would not fairly represent their interests and respect their rights. Considering Crimea’s decision illegal, the US and EU accused Moscow of annexing the peninsula and imposed economic sanctions on Russia. Following the escalation of violence in Donbass, Western states imposed further sanctions on Russia, pushing Moscow to respond with retaliatory restrictions.